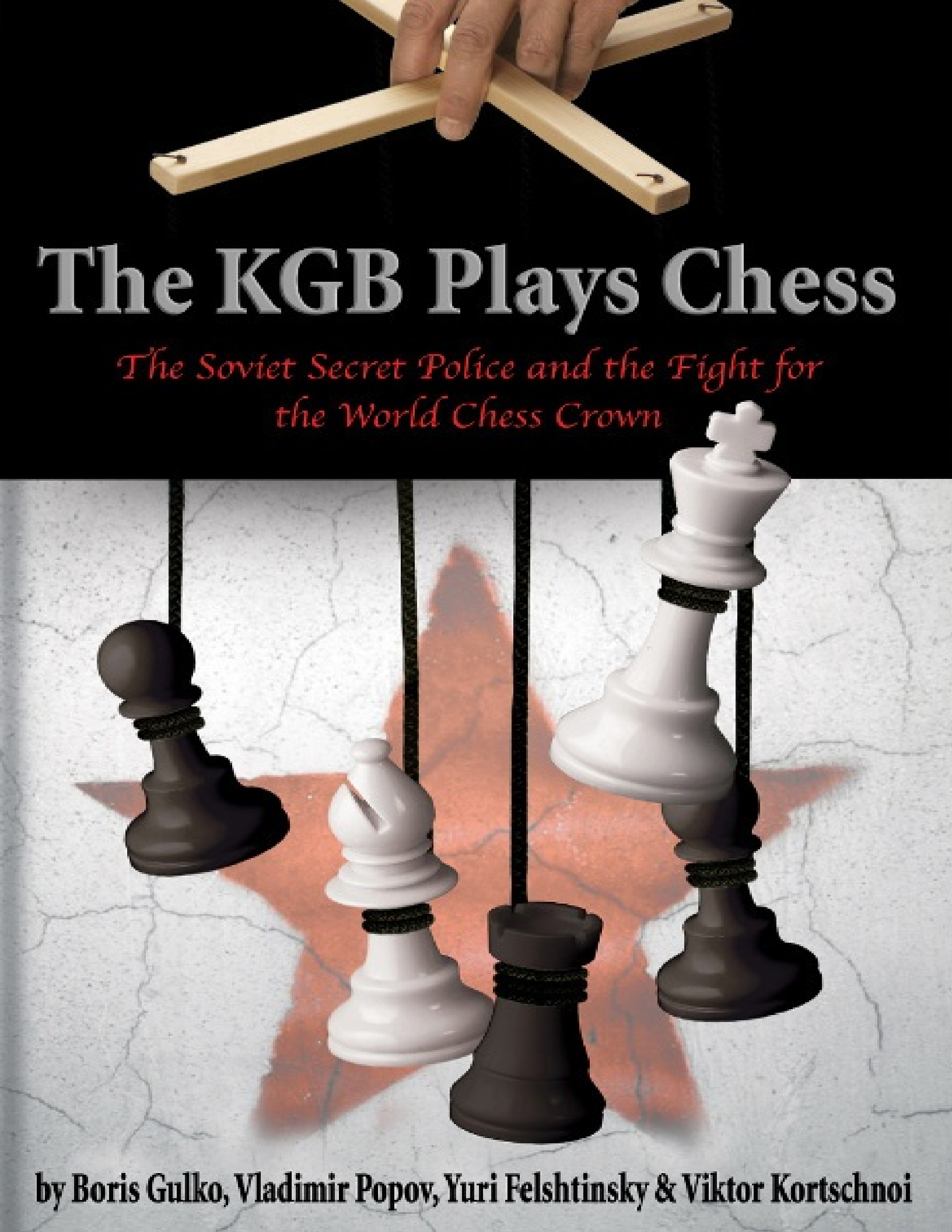
The KGB Plays Chess

The Soviet Secret Police and the Fight for the World Chess Crown



by Boris Gulko, Vladimir Popov, Yuri Felshtinsky & Viktor Kortschnoi

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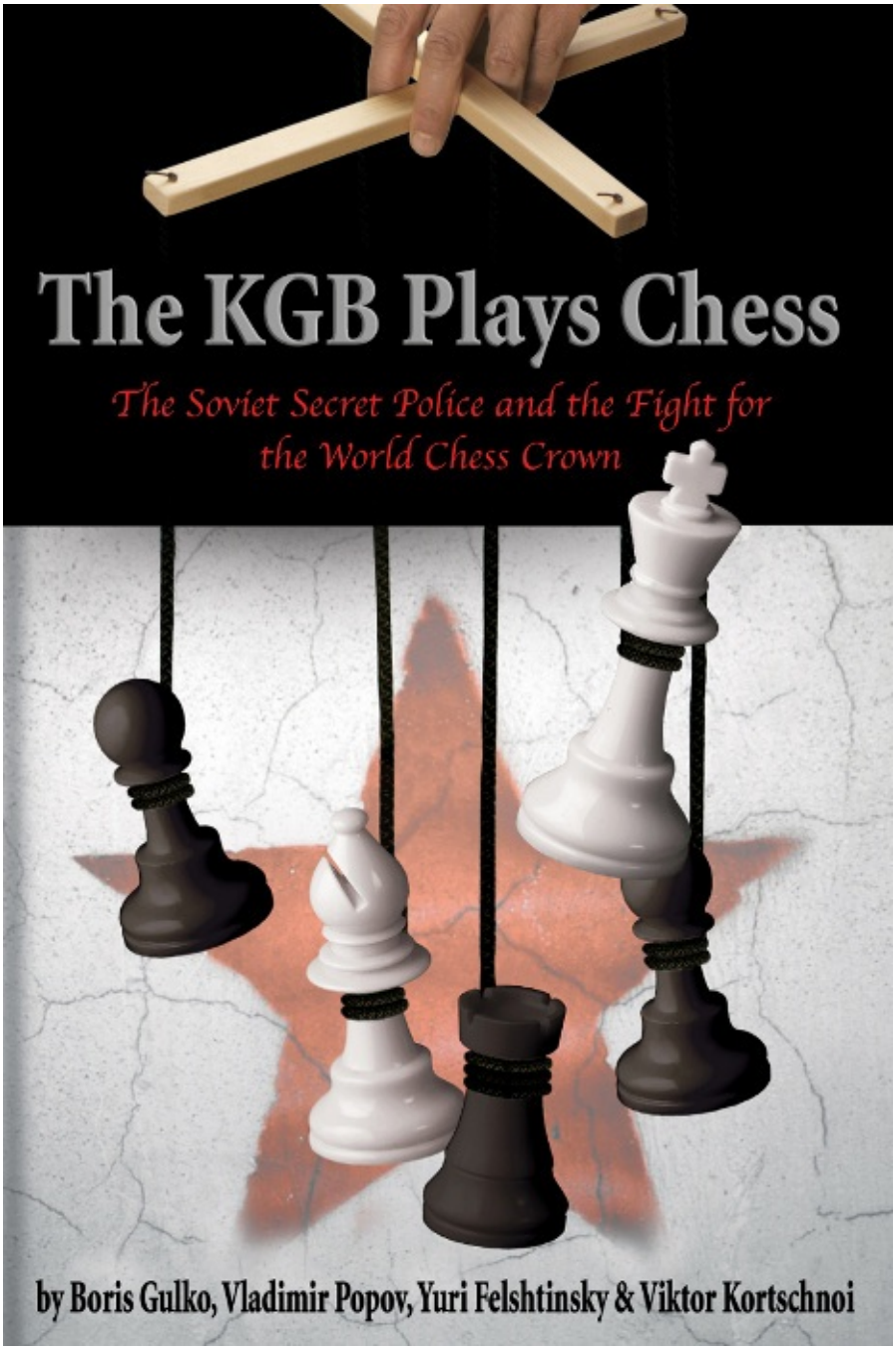
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2010

Russell Enterprises, Inc.

Milford, CT USA

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The Soviet Secret Police and the Fight for the World Chess Crown by Boris Gulko, Vladimir Popov, Yuri Felshtinsky & Viktor Kortschnoi ISBN: 978-1-888690-75-0

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Published by:
Russell Enterprises, Inc.
P.O. Box 5460
Milford, CT 06460 USA

http://www.russell-enterprises.com
info@russell-enterprises.com

Cover design by Janel Lowrance Printed in the United States of America

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About the Authors

Boris Gulko, born in Germany in 1947, grew up in Moscow. Gulko graduated from Moscow State University with a major in psychology and worked as a research associate for four years.

In 1975, Gulko became an international master and a professional chess player, and in 1976, a grandmaster. Gulko was USSR chess champion in 1977 and twice champion of Moscow.

For seven years, from 1979 to 1986, Gulko was a “refusenik.” After a difficult struggle, which included three hunger strikes and a month of daily demonstrations and arrests, Gulko and his family emigrated to the United States.

Gulko won the U.S. chess championship in 1994 and 1999. In 1994, he was one of eight candidates for a match for the world championship, and in 2000, one of 16 participants in the 1/8 final for the world championship. Gulko has won numerous international and national chess tournaments, and he has a plus record against Garry Kasparov (three wins, one loss, four draws).

Gulko's articles and essays, both on chess-related and non-chess-related topics, have been published in the United States, Israel, and Russia.

Vladimir Popov was born on August 8, 1947 in Moscow. In 1966, he was drafted into the Soviet Army, serving in East Germany until 1969. From 1969 to 1972, he worked as a test engineer in Ilyushin's design office.

From 1972 to 1974, Popov worked in the Tenth Department of the KGB, as a clerk in the Secretariat and junior operative in the Second Division (background checks on individuals traveling abroad). In 1974, he graduated from the All-Union Correspondence Law Institute (now the Law Academy of Russia). From 1974 to 1977, he served as junior operative and then operative in the Second Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB (this division oversaw all associations of creative professionals). In 1975, he completed a special course of study at the KGB's Higher Education School (while continuing to work as an operative).

Between 1977 and 1989, Popov served as operative and then senior operative in the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB (this division oversaw international sports exchange channels). In 1986, he graduated from the International Department of the University of Marxism-Leninism, where he had been enrolled as a correspondence student, while continuing to work as an operative.

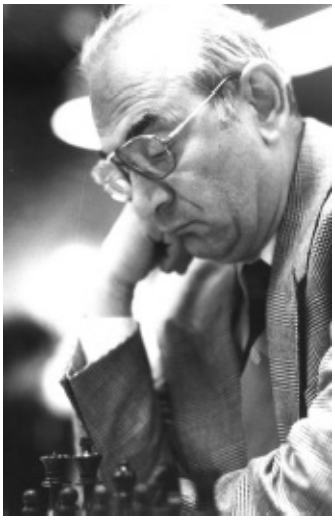
In 1989 and 1990, Popov served as deputy head of the Twelfth Group of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB (coordinating work with “friends” – the state security services of the Warsaw Pact countries).

In January 1990, Popov tendered his resignation, but was not dismissed immediately. From the beginning of 1990 until October 1991, he served as a consultant for the KGB’s Center of Public Relations (the KGB’s former press office).

During the attempted August Putsch in 1991, Popov refused to go along with the KGB’s activities on the very first day of the putsch, August 19. He was dismissed in October 1991 with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1996, he immigrated to Canada, where he lives at the present time.

Yuri Felshtinsky was born in Moscow in 1956. In 1974, he began studying history at the Moscow Pedagogical Institute. In 1978, he immigrated to the United States and continued studying history, first at Brandeis University, then at Rutgers, where he received a Ph.D. in history in 1988. In 1993, he defended a doctoral dissertation at the History Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, becoming the first foreign citizen to receive a doctoral degree in Russia. Felshtinsky has compiled, edited, and annotated several dozen volumes of archival documents in Russian history. His own books include *The Bolsheviks and the Left SRs* (1985), *Towards a History of Our Isolation* (1988); *The Failure*

of the World Revolution (1991); *Lenin and His Comrades* (2010); *Blowing up Russia* (with Alexander Litvinenko, 2007); *The Corporation: Russia and the KGB in the Age of President Putin* (with Vladimir Pribylovsky, 2008).



Viktor Kortschnoi was born in 1931 in Leningrad. Kortschnoi graduated from Leningrad State University with a major in history. He became first a Soviet, then a Swiss chess player. A grandmaster, Kortschnoi first qualified as a candidate for the world championship in 1962.

Kortschnoi was a four-time USSR chess champion (1960, 1962, 1964, 1970), a two-time winner of interzonal tournaments (1973, 1987) and candidates tournaments (1977, 1980), and a five-time European champion. Kortschnoi participated in world chess matches in 1978 and 1981 (both times against Anatoly Karpov), and in a candidates final in 1974 (also against Karpov).

Because of restrictions placed on him by the KGB and the Soviet government, he defected from the Soviet Union after a tournament in Amsterdam in the summer of 1976, settled in Switzerland, and obtained a Swiss citizenship in 1994. Kortschnoi plays for Switzerland in international competitions.

Foreword

by Boris Gulko

For Soviet people, chess was a source of things that were in extremely short supply in the former superpower: freedom of expression without ideological control and honest competition whose outcome was determined not by membership in the Communist Party and the “right” ethnic profile, but by individual merit. For the lucky ones who were able to earn a living by playing chess, the game meant a decent income and even – the prize most coveted by those who were cut off from the world by the Iron Curtain – trips to matches abroad. In return for relative freedom, chess players brought international prestige to the Soviet regime: Soviet chess players were the strongest in the world.

And being as mindless as it in fact was, the Soviet regime provided this form of competition and recreation that it found to be so “profitable” for itself not only with a chess federation, and not only with its own department at the Sports Committee of the USSR, but also with constant supervision by the “armed wing of the Communist party,” the KGB.

Because of the clandestine nature of the KGB’s activities, accounts of its work with leading Soviet chess players have been few and far between, and above all, one-sided, coming mainly from chess players who had the unpleasant experience of running up against the KGB’s “nurturing care” in their professional lives. We now have a unique opportunity to become acquainted with the KGB’s work on the “chess front” from inside this organization itself, since former KGB lieutenant colonel Vladimir Popov – one of the fighters on the KGB’s “chess front,” who has relocated to the West – and the historian Yuri Felshtinsky have

written an account of the KGB's activities among athletes, and in particular, chess players.

Before talking about their book, let me say a few words about the history of the relationship between the Soviet Union's leading chess players and its government.

Mikhail Botvinnik, the founder of the Soviet school of chess and the first Soviet world champion, was an ideological Communist, although an idiosyncratic one. From his youth, he set himself the goal of bringing the world championship title to his country. And as is well known from Communist theory and practice, the ends justify the means. Thus, while it was Grigory Levenfish, the chess champion of the USSR, who was invited to attend the AVRO chess tournament in the Netherlands in 1938 – one of the most celebrated tournaments at which the world's eight top chess players competed to determine a challenger for the world champion – it was Mikhail Botvinnik, not Levenfish, who actually ended up going to this tournament (the Soviet government did not trust Levenfish and was afraid to allow him to leave the country).

Did the government make it easier or harder for Botvinnik to win? Evidently, it did both. In the middle of the 1948 world championship tournament, which brought Botvinnik the world title, the grandmaster was summoned to a meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Andrey Zhdanov, one of Joseph Stalin's closest collaborators, told Botvinnik:

"We are afraid that Reshevsky (the great American grandmaster) will become world champion. How would you like it if the Soviet participants lost to you on purpose?"

"I lost the ability to speak," Botvinnik recalled. "Why did Zhdanov have to humiliate me? When I regained the ability to speak, I categorically rejected his

offer.”

Naturally, such an upheaval could not have passed without having any effect, and Botvinnik lost his next game in the tournament – against none other than Reshevsky.

Vasily Smyslov, who took the world championship title away from Botvinnik for one year in 1957, was not the “Soviet man” that the Communist Party imagined him to be. In 1977, when I was barred from all tournaments for one year for refusing to sign a letter against Kortschnoi, I served as Smyslov’s coach at a competition in Leningrad, held on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Bolshevik *putsch*. Smyslov, a religious Christian, described the Soviet government to me as “demonic” during our walks around the Alexander Nevsky Monastery. However, in an age when the possibility to travel to a major tournament was decided not by an invitation from its organizers or by one’s titles, but by the decree of bureaucrats at the Sports Committee, Smyslov made shrewd use of this “demonic government.” He wrote letters to his fans in the upper echelons of the government, got his rivals withdrawn from tournaments, and took their places for himself.

Tigran Petrosian, the ninth world champion – the next in age after Smyslov, although not the next in chronological order – was not a member of the party, as far as I know, but actively collaborated with the KGB. The fact that Petrosian was an informer for the KGB is mentioned in this book.

The unforgettable Mikhail Tal, the eighth world champion, did not collaborate with the KGB, was apolitical, and took a lot of grief from the government, the party, and the KGB. The only thing that he strived for in life was to participate in tournaments. But the government, for some reason, needed to have the genius from Riga not participate in tournaments. Tal accepted compromises in order to satisfy his “all-consuming passion for self-expression,” as Gennadi Sosonko

characterized Tal's attitude toward chess in his sketch about him. Tal signed a dirty philippic against Kortschnoi when the latter defected. Before that, Tal had already become a coach to the "party's darling," Karpov, giving him a great deal of help in his world championship matches against Kortschnoi. This allowed Tal to play in several significant tournaments and to win not a few wonderful games.

It is said that Tal's work with Karpov came to a sudden end. In responding to a questionnaire, when asked to name the best chess player of 1983, Tal wrote "Kasparov" – and instantly became Karpov's enemy. The unprecedented fight between Karpov and Kasparov was in its initial stages, and Karpov no longer trusted Tal as his coach.

The KGB Plays Chess answers an interesting question that has been the subject of discussion in chess journals. During the Chess Olympiad in Novi Sad in 1990, Tal told Kortschnoi that if Kortschnoi had defeated Karpov in the world championship, the KGB would have killed Kortschnoi. Tal found out about this while working as Karpov's coach. When Kortschnoi published the contents of this conversation, the editor of the journal *64 – Chess Review* (*Shakhmatnoye obozreniye*) Alexander Roshal (mentioned in this book as an agent of the KGB) wrote in his journal that Tal was evidently joking and that all rumors concerning preparations for the physical elimination of Kortschnoi were "absurd and far from reality." *The KGB Plays Chess* confirms that Kortschnoi's murder was indeed being prepared.

The first outstanding dissident chess player was the tenth world champion, Boris Spassky. While he held the title, there was a hysteria in the Soviet press over the trial of Angela Davis – a member of the American Communist Party charged as an accomplice in the murder of a judge. Spassky did not sign a letter in defense of the "progressive" activist. In those days (I know from my personal experience after not signing a letter censuring Kortschnoi), the refusal to sign an official letter was severely punished.

Spassky did not conceal the fact that he was a dissident, however. As an artistic personality, he derived particular enjoyment from saying things that were insulting to the Communist government or mockingly imitating Lenin in the presence of highly-placed Soviet officials who were formally or clandestinely collaborating with the KGB.

Spassky told me that his defeat in the famous world championship match against Bobby Fischer was partly explained by the bungling leadership of the party and the KGB, the “care” foisted upon him and his colleagues during the preparation for the games. “They destroyed me” was how Spassky described his experience.

The KGB actively persecuted Spassky when he decided to marry Marina, an employee of the French embassy in Moscow, and later, when he wanted to join her in France. It was during this period that the KGB made the odious, fortunately unsuccessful, attempts to infect the French woman’s underclothes with venereal disease, as described in this book.

As he told me, Spassky feared that his fight against the Soviet system would result in his death, and only the energetic and effective help of Egon Evertz – the West German steel casting magnate and chess sponsor – made it possible for Spassky finally to leave the USSR.

One of the central figures in this book is the twelfth world champion, Anatoly Karpov. There was evidence that Karpov collaborated with the KGB even before this book was written. Now we know even the secret code name given by the KGB to the twelfth champion of the world – “Raoul.”

Possessing a powerful intellect, a great player and a great manipulator, Karpov made splendid use of the opportunities which opened up before him as an agent of the KGB. He forced some chess players to become his assistants. In this way, as I was told by mutual acquaintances, it was explained to Tal that after the

denunciation that Petrosian had written against him, Tal would once more be denied permission to travel abroad, and that the only way for him to “clear himself” and to preserve the possibility to continue playing was to become a coach to “the darling of the Soviet people, the party, and the KGB,” Anatoly Karpov. One wonders whether such a denunciation by Petrosian really existed.

In any event, many prominent chess players eagerly volunteered to coach Karpov since the latter was in possession of the kind of currency that chess players valued most: he was in a position to decide who got to travel to international tournaments. In June 1979, Karpov’s manager, Alexander Bakh, made me an offer on behalf of the world champion to take part that very autumn in what was at that time the most prestigious of all tournaments, in Tilburg, if I withdrew my request for permission to emigrate. Since there were no other opportunities to use me “for the good of the cause,” my request to emigrate was simply denied for seven long years – I became a “refusenik.” Actually, as this book reveals, it was only for the first three and a half years that my wife and I were not released from the Soviet Union “for the good of the cause.” The next three and a half years we remained “refuseniks” because Karpov was upset that we had spoken out in defense of Viktor Kortschnoi’s son Igor, who had been imprisoned for nothing, as a hostage.

The building up of Karpov as the only defender of the Soviet fatherland has a interesting history. After the first match between Kortschnoi and Karpov in Moscow in the autumn of 1974, Kortschnoi was hounded in the press and stripped of the honorary title “Distinguished Master of Sports.” His stipend was lowered and he was temporarily denied permission to travel abroad. Then Kortschnoi was released in order to take part in a foreign tournament. And when Kortschnoi did not come back, the Soviet fatherland was left with only one Soviet contender for the title of world champion, who was propped up on all sides with assistance from the party and the KGB, Anatoly Karpov. Only Karpov

himself can tell us whether this was the outcome of a brilliantly played gambit on his part or simply a lucky accident for him. But why should he tell us that?

Karpov's relations with his next rival – another major character in this book, the thirteenth world champion, Garry Kasparov – developed along similar lines. Why did Kasparov not defect from the Soviet Union after the KGB called off his match with Kortschnoi in the summer of 1983 and effectively disqualified him? Why did he not do so after charges of spying were brought against several of his assistants, or when Karpov obtained information that could, in Kasparov's opinion, have been obtained only through KGB channels? I don't know.

With respect to Kasparov's disqualification... In his multi-volume work about world champions, Kasparov recounts how Karpov invited him to his house – when he was still young and inexperienced – and talked him into consenting to call off his match with Kortschnoi. In return, Kasparov was promised that the Soviet Chess Federation would sooner break up the World Chess Federation than allow him to be harmed. After Kasparov's disqualification, these promises were forgotten.

With respect to spies and agents... The charges put forward by Kasparov were discussed and questioned in the chess world. The account in this book makes it clear that direct spying could have been accompanied by wiretapping, "penetration D," "penetration T," surveillance, and who knows what else. Although straightforward spying – i.e., agents – could have been used as well, of course.

The contest between Karpov and Kasparov took place on two battlefields – on the chess board and among the top officials who decided how Soviet people should live and work. Two events in this great conflict between these two no less great chess players stand out: the organized disqualification of Kasparov during his match with Kortschnoi in 1983 (and the subsequent, remarkable rescue of

this match) and the scandalous suspension of the first match for the world championship between Karpov and Kasparov in 1984 in Moscow. What forces were involved in the behind-the-scenes struggle between these two great chess players, and who was making the fateful decisions in this battle? My impression has always been that some of these decisions were made by members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The present book claims that these decisions were made by the KGB. Judging by the ease with which KGB operatives soon replaced the functionaries of the Communist Party within the Russian government, it is indeed quite possible that the KGB was already making all the decisions in 1984. And, therefore, that the authors of the account presented here are correct. The exact facts will become known to us when some former member of the Politburo of that time, say, Mikhail Gorbachev, moves to the West and publishes his memoirs here.

Fate put my wife and me on the list of chess players who ended up on the receiving end of the KGB's aggression. For seven long years, they "worked on our file." Apparently, the attempt of two recent champions of the USSR to emigrate legally from the Soviet Union had undermined some of the basic foundations that supported the government and its guardian, the KGB. As I read this book about the KGB and chess now, I am astonished at the amount of resources that the former superpower invested in the fight against me: how many people contributed their professional and emotional energy to the attempt to keep us down! Thank God, these are things that I could only guess at in those years. Had I known then that, during that whole time, every sound in our apartment was recorded, transmitted, and analyzed by the KGB's "experts," would I not have gone crazy? How would it have felt always to live "in public," in front of an interested audience from the KGB?

Much of the psychological work done by the KGB's operatives, however, was wasted. I simply did not understand its subtleties. This book describes how I was

delivered to the office of a big boss at the Lubyanka, the KGB's headquarters. The purpose was to impress me and to scare me. The official to whom I was brought, General Abramov, for some reason of his own, introduced himself as a colonel. It was all the same to me at the time – colonel, general, anything. And as for fear... the only thing I remember feeling is curiosity.

It is only now that I experience a kind of pride when I read in this book that, after our first demonstration near the Hotel Sport in 1982, the orangutan-like creature who dragged Anya and me to the police car was not a run-of-the-mill KGB thug, as I believed at the time, but the head of some department at the agency, Lieutenant Colonel Ernst Davnis.

In any case, when things got serious, despite the round-the-clock wiretapping, the surveillance, the agents' informers, the KGB pretty often blew it. The account in this book indicates that, in working on my case, "all of the resources available to the operational subdivisions of Soviet state security were put to use. After Gulko was denied permission to emigrate, Lieutenant Colonel Perfiliev, the deputy head of the eleventh department, insisted that the eleventh department of the KGB's Fifth Directorate continue working on his case. He initially believed that this work would give him a chance to display his achievements before the leadership of the KGB's Fifth Directorate with victorious reports about his fight against Gulko. In actual fact, work on Gulko's case every day brought more and more problems and more and more examples of Perfiliev's bungled setbacks." His setbacks were our victories.

I think that the painful victory that we achieved at the end of our seven-year standoff with the KGB was owed not just to the knack for fighting that we acquired playing chess. Anya and I were parts of a mystical process, in which many thousands of Soviet Jews – one of the most disenfranchised and harassed parts of the population of the Soviet empire – boldly became involved in a seemingly hopeless undertaking: the attempt to obtain the possibility to leave the

Soviet Union. And despite the might of the KGB, which opposed this attempt and persecuted us, the Jews achieved their goal. During the most difficult moments of our campaign, we still managed to outplay the KGB every time, to stage our demonstrations, and to avoid our persecutors.

At the heart of this book are the fates of six chess players. Five of them opposed the KGB. All of them attained their goals. Boris Spassky was able to marry a French woman and to leave the USSR. Viktor Kortschnoi, five years after fleeing from the USSR and after two and a half years of his son's imprisonment, was able to obtain permission for his family to emigrate. Garry Kasparov, despite the fact that Karpov had the KGB for an ally, won and valorously retained the title of world champion. Even after ending his career in chess, he continues to fight against the KGB-FSB, which has currently taken over the government of Russia. My wife, Anya, and I, after only seven years of struggle, won our most important prize: the freedom not to live in the land of the KGB.

Of course, these victories at times had to be paid for with years of imprisonment for people who were close to us, with ruined careers and nervous systems, with disappointments in various friends. But victories, as chess players know, must always be paid for.

The sixth major character in this book, Anatoly Karpov, fought on the other side of the barricades. And he, too, was successful. He managed to play two world championship matches with Viktor Kortschnoi when his organization was holding his opponent's son in prison as a hostage. The list of Karpov's achievement in his "political" fight with Kasparov is too long to be repeated anew. One can only marvel at the fact that Kasparov was nonetheless able to win the world championship title from Karpov. Our seven years as "refuseniks" were also the achievement of Karpov and his colleagues from the KGB. Now, when the leadership of the KGB has partly privatized Russia, Karpov has also received his piece of the pie.

Anatoly Karpov playing Viktor Kortschnoi in the 1974 Candidates Match

I conclude by saying that command over the strategic techniques of chess, mental and psychological, can help one in confrontations with the KGB, no matter in what era these confrontations take place. In 2007, Garry Kasparov was arrested for... Well, for nothing, really, he was simply arrested and placed in solitary confinement for five days at the Moscow Directorate of Internal Affairs on Petrovka Street. Anatoly Karpov paid a visit to this directorate and brought Kasparov a chess journal to make his stay in jail less tedious. This episode could serve as a symbol of the care that chess players have received from the KGB.

The KGB Plays Chess

by Vladimir Popov & Yuri Felshtinsky

In the days of the USSR and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, there existed an organization whose name to this day terrifies both the citizens of the country where it was created and operated for many decades, as well as the inhabitants of other countries. The name of this organization was the Committee for State Security (KGB). In the documents of the Soviet Communist Party, the KGB was referred to as the "armed wing of the party." This organization, like its predecessors the VChK, the OGPU, the NKVD, and the MGB, was created by a party that controlled the government of the USSR – the Communist Party of the Soviet Union – for the express purpose of fighting against its adversaries, both inside the country and abroad. The party named its enemies, and the state security organs – as instruments of battle – ruthlessly disposed of them. To show pity for the enemies of the party was dangerous. He who was not sufficiently ruthless with the enemies was either their accessory or himself an enemy. And it was Stalin, the "great leader of all peoples," who taught how enemies were to be dealt with: "If an enemy does not surrender, he is destroyed."

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has had different enemies during different periods in its history, but the most dangerous among them were the ideological opponents of the regime. The party feared them above all others and was always ready to wage an uncompromising and merciless fight against them. The strategy of this fight was worked out by the main organ of the Communist Party of the USSR, the Central Committee, and in particular by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda. This was the agency that controlled all of the country's ideological organizations, including the media. The latter, carrying out the assignments of the CPSU, which was the "governing and directing" power in

the country, filled the minds of Soviet citizens and the international community with vast amounts of false information, whose purpose was to extol the Communist regime in the Soviet Union and the leaders of the Communist Party.

Anything that furthered this goal was useful. One of the powerful factors in the ideological struggle with the West was the international sports arena. In the opinion of the leaders of the CPSU, the victories of Soviet athletes in various kinds of sports, in world championships and in the Olympics, were supposed to vividly demonstrate to the whole world the superiority of the Soviet system over Western democracies.

From the mid-1970s until the beginning of the perestroika years, the Department of Propaganda at the Central Committee of the CPSU was headed by the former first secretary of the central committee of the Komsomol, Yevgeny Tyazhelnikov. His deputy was an experienced party functionary named Marat Gramov who came from the same part of the country and was a personal friend of the man who started perestroika, Mikhail Gorbachev.

The personalities of the ideologues Tyazhelnikov and Gramov merit more detailed descriptions. As the second ranking ideologue in the country (after the famous long-term survivor in the party pantheon, Suslov), Tyazhelnikov became so fond of high art that in seeking to develop a deeper appreciation of it, he carried over his fondness for art to specific artists. It was mainly men that attracted him – in particular, ballet dancers from the famous Bolshoi Theater. Once, one of the principal ballerinas at the Bolshoi Theater received a telephone call during rehearsals from an unknown man, who described himself as a friend of her husband. Her husband was also a ballet dancer, and no less well-known in the USSR and abroad than his famous wife. The mysterious caller told the ballerina that he was calling at her husband’s request. Her husband had suffered a heart attack and wanted her to come home at once. The loyal wife rushed home and found her husband in the arms of Tyazhelnikov. A big scandal ensued and

Tyazhelnikov was immediately dispatched as an ambassador to Romania, far away from the scene of his shame.

Tyazhelnikov's deputy, Gramov, was distinguished neither by a superior intellect nor by elitist tendencies. He was an ordinary and mediocre apparatchik, just like his and Tyazhelnikov's boss, the Central Committee's secretary of ideology, Mikhail Suslov, who was nicknamed "A Man in a Case," after the Chekhov story. Suslov had a pathological fear of catching a cold and was therefore permanently overdressed. When it was cold, all of the buttons on his coat were buttoned, including the top one, at the neck, while a pair of galoshes was perpetually on his feet. The personnel from Ninth Directorate of the KGB who provided security for the Central Committee's facilities and were familiar with Suslov's quirks knew that, when he went in or out of the building, they had to hold the doors open for him one at a time; heaven forbid that they should open the doors all at once – this might produce a draft of air. Ignorance of this rule cost one of them his career. Trying to please Suslov, he threw open both the inside and the outside doors simultaneously – and was instantly fired.

Only mediocre and faceless people could survive under such a boss. It was not for nothing that Gramov was nicknamed "Ogurtsov" ("Mr. Cucumber") by the people who knew him, after one of the characters in Eldar Ryazanov's 1960's comedy *Carnival Night*. Ogurtsov, a bumbling and obtuse Soviet bureaucrat, was played by the wonderful actor Igor Ilyinsky. After the movie came out, "Ogurtsov" became a common nickname.

For many years, Gramov nurtured the hope of becoming the head of the Soviet sports movement. He was attracted by the opportunity to travel abroad, to serve as a representative in international sports associations, and also to obtain access to the considerable monetary resources that that the USSR spent to achieve victories in sports. As someone who had for many years managed elite sports in the Soviet Union for the Central Committee, Gramov better than anyone else

appreciated all the advantages of such a position. Standing between Gramov and his dream was Sergei Pavlov, an exceptional and charismatic man, the former first secretary of the Komsomol's central committee and subsequently the head of the State Sports Committee. Like any exceptional personality, he had powerful and cunning enemies. After the end of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, in which Soviet athletes won a record-breaking number of medals because of the boycott of the Olympics by the world's leading athletes, Pavlov was to everyone's surprise, unexpectedly sent as Soviet ambassador to Mongolia. This was a shameful exile for this energetic and ambitious man that ended up costing him his life. He became gravely ill and died soon after.

After Pavlov fell out of favor and was exiled to Mongolia, the directorship of Soviet sports passed to Gramov, who had a powerful protector in his friend – by this time, a lieutenant general and head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB – Ivan Abramov. Gramov took Vyacheslav Gavrilin, a sports writer for the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* and an agent at the First Department of the Third Directorate of the KGB (later this directorate was renamed the Third Main Directorate of the KGB), as his deputy. From a simple newspaper worker, Gramov elevated Gavrilin to the position of deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the USSR.

When the first vice president of the International Olympic Committee, Vitaly Smirnov, learned about this strange appointment, he asked: "Is this the same Gavrilin who cuts salami at Gramov's dacha?"

> *Vyacheslav Gavrilin, deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the USSR, was recruited into the First Department of the Third Main Directorate of the KGB (military counterintelligence) while working as a correspondent for the newspaper* Krasnaya Zvezda. *Gavrilin's handler was Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.*

Vitaly Smirnov, the vice president of the International Olympic Committee and head of the National Olympic Committee of the USSR, was recruited in 1978 by the deputy head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, Major General Ivan Abramov.

Gavrilin's salami-slicing skills compensated for his general lack of culture and inability to communicate with people. He would shock international sports representatives who visited Moscow before the Goodwill Games in 1984 and in later years by taking a greasy newspaper out of his briefcase, in the car on the way from the airport, and extracting from it a salami, which he would then proceed to slice. After that, his guest would be invited to split a bottle of vodka.

Gavrilin and Gramov stole whatever they could get their hands on. They began to create various commercial schemes that brought them enormous profits and thus they can legitimately be considered the founders of corruption in Soviet sports. In addition, they left behind them a legacy as persecutors of a number of outstanding Soviet chess players.

While he was still deputy head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda at the Central Committee of the CPSU, Gramov, a convinced anti-Semite, directed the brunt of his hatred against one of the Soviet Union's leading grandmasters, Viktor Kortschnoi. With his powerful personality and intellect, Kortschnoi was an exceptional and outspoken figure, distinguished by the bluntness of his opinions, including his views on Soviet reality, the state of affairs in the Chess Federation of the USSR, and its members.

For many years, the Central Chess Club in Moscow was headed by the deputy head of the Chess Federation of the USSR, Viktor Baturinsky.

Viktor Baturinsky, director of the Central Chess Club, head of the Chess Directorate at the State Sports Committee of the USSR, was recruited into

the MGB (the predecessor to the KGB) in 1947. During the 1970s and 1980s, Baturinsky's handlers were officers Anatoly Smaznov and Vladimir Lavrov of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.

The head of the Chess Federation was Vitali Sevastyanov, cosmonaut and two-time Hero of the Soviet Union, whose duties consisted mainly of public relations. Baturinsky became the head of Soviet chess after spending a number of decades on a completely different form of activity. He had served as an official in the military prosecutor's office and subsequently as military prosecutor. During Stalin's rule, he had been one of the active implementers and supporters of Stalin's repressions. For this reason, his career had been successful – awards, positions, and titles followed one after another. The success of his career was facilitated by another factor: Baturinsky's long-term collaboration with the organs of state security. As an agent of the MGB-KGB, Baturinsky regularly informed on his colleagues at the prosecutor's office, denouncing their negative pronouncements and attitudes, and thus surreptitiously eliminating his rivals at work. That was why Baturinsky's career growth, to the envy of many of his colleagues, was so remarkably rapid and successful.

After working for the allotted number of years, Baturinsky retired. But Baturinsky's talents as an agent and a provocateur were not forgotten by his overseers from the state security apparatus. He was appointed director of the Moscow Chess Club. Baturinsky looked after his daughter Marina, too, securing for her a place in the international directorate of the State Sports Committee. She was soon recruited, with her father's recommendation, as an agent of the KGB by Captain Vladimir Lavrov of the First Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate. From that time on, Marina Baturinskaya had no difficulty traveling abroad in the capacity of translator for Soviet teams.

Could Baturinsky, as an agent with many years of experience, have failed to notice Kortschnoi's blunt pronouncements about himself and the state of affairs

in the chess federation? Of course not. And the reports that Baturinsky submitted to officer Smaznov – his handler in the First Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate – skillfully underscored Kortschnoi's negative attitude toward Soviet reality. At the same time, the State Sports Committee and the Department of Propaganda received information through official channels from the Soviet Chess Federation about Kortschnoi's critical attitude toward Soviet reality.

As a result of Baturinsky's reports to state security organs, the KGB opened an "operational check file" on Kortschnoi to document instances of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" on his part. Such files were kept for up to six months, and their purpose was to obtain accurate facts about the anti-Soviet attitudes of the person under investigation (the "target of the file," in KGB terminology). After sufficient information confirming the "target's" anti-Soviet pronouncements was gathered, a new file was opened, "an operational development file," for collecting concrete materials pertaining to the "target's" unlawful activities with accompanying documentation for subsequently bringing criminal charges against him, conducting preliminary hearings, and transferring the case to a court of law.

It should be noted that quite a number of Soviet grandmasters were state security agents. Tigran Petrosian, Lev Polugaevsky, Yuri Balashov, Rafael Vaganian, Eduard Gufeld, and Nikolai Krogius, the head of the Chess Directorate at the State Sports Committee, had extensive experience in collaborating with the KGB as covert agents. The same was true of the long-time editor-in-chief of the magazine *64 – Chess Review,* Alexander Roshal.

> *Tigran Petrosian, world chess champion, was recruited in 1973 by officer Anatoly Smaznov of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.*

Lev Polugaevsky was recruited in 1980 by Lieutenant Colonel Igor Perfiliev of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.

Rafael Vaganian was recruited in 1983 by the Fifth Department of the Armenian KGB. Vaganian worked with Soviet grandmasters, including during trips abroad.

Eduard Gufeld was recruited in 1981 by Igor Perfiliev.

Nikolai Krogius, head of the Chess Directorate at the State Sports Committee of the USSR from 1980 until 1990, was recruited in 1980 by the deputy head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, Lieutenant Colonel Igor Perfiliev. Code name: Endgame (Endshpil).

Alexander Roshal, editor-in-chief of the journal 64 – Chess Review, was recruited in 1978 by the deputy head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, Lieutenant Colonel Ernst Davnis.

The KGB made use of all of these people in working on the case of Kortschnoi and his circle. Those who were close to Kortschnoi acquired firsthand knowledge of the power of the Soviet repression machine. Among them was Kortschnoi's son, Igor, who was put in prison on trumped-up charges, as well as the grandmaster Boris Gulko – Kortschnoi's putative helper – who spent many years fighting for the right to leave the USSR and being subjected to all kinds of molestations and privations, along with his family, before they were finally allowed to emigrate.

With respect to Kortschnoi, the Soviet government pursued a policy of outright harassment, and he was left with no other choice than to leave the Soviet Union forever. The Soviet government machine placed its bets on Anatoly Karpov, a rising star in the chess firmament, who was obedient and easily manageable.

Kortschnoi, an emotional nonconformist and a Jew, was of no use to the Soviet system. In 1976, while attending an international chess tournament in Holland, Kortschnoi requested political asylum, which he soon received in Switzerland. Leaving behind the country where he was born and raised, and whose glory in the world of chess he had greatly advanced, Kortschnoi, whose family was still in the USSR, had little notion of how many trials and battles with the Soviet system he would still have to endure.

In the early 1970s, a young man of average height, with a pleasant appearance, joined the ranks of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB. This was Vladimir Pishchenko, whose name would appear in many newspapers around the world in only a few years. He began his career, however, in the same, ordinary way as most of his colleagues. His first appointment was in the Third Department of the Fifth Directorate, and his job was to oversee Moscow State University and Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University. State security officers who oversaw these institutions were tasked with identifying foreign security agents who had come to the Soviet Union to study as undergraduate and graduate students and recruiting foreign students for collaboration with the KGB and their subsequent embedding in foreign countries. In order to facilitate the investigation of undergraduate and graduate students from foreign countries, the KGB pursued a policy of intensively recruiting agents among Soviet professors and students as well.

As a Moscow State University graduate with a major in economics, Pishchenko became the overseer of a department at his old school and thus found himself in familiar surroundings. But his reappearance at his Alma Mater in a new capacity, as a state security officer, was accompanied by another development in his life.

After completing his secondary schooling, Pishchenko had been drafted into the Soviet Army. He served as a truck driver, and after being discharged, he worked for a couple of years as a driver for the Inturist car fleet. His parents were

professional drivers as well. Seeing their existence, he understood that the only path to a decent life in the USSR was to acquire a higher education. At Moscow State University, Pishchenko married a young woman named Lyudmila. Lyudmila, like her mother, worked in the central apparatus of the KGB, as a secretary in one of the departments of the Second Main Directorate. Not without help from his wife's relatives, Pishchenko was sent on an internship to Cuba while he was still only an upperclassman. In half a year there, he managed to become proficient in Spanish. After graduating from Moscow State University, once again with help from his wife's relatives, he was hired by the KGB and sent to attend two years of courses that included intensive study of a foreign language. His second language was English. After completing his studies, Pishchenko became an officer in the KGB's Fifth Directorate.

In 1977, a group of Cuban state security officers arrived in the Soviet Union for training. In Cuba, these officers handled questions similar to those handled by the Fifth Directorate of the KGB in the USSR. Senior Lieutenant Pishchenko of the Fifth Directorate's Third Department was assigned to work with this delegation as a translator. After the Cuban officers completed their training, they were treated to a luxury cruise on the Volga. They were accompanied by two officials from the KGB's Fifth Directorate: Pishchenko and Vladimir Strunin, the head of this directorate's First Department, whose colleagues had nicknamed him "Drunken Hedgehog." He always wore a crew cut (called a "hedgehog cut" in Russian), and the telltale patchwork of blood vessels that embellished his nose and cheeks left no doubt as to his partiality for alcohol. It should be pointed out that neither the typical characteristics that marked him as a drunkard nor his embarrassing nickname prevented him, thanks to the support of General Abramov (a.k.a. "Vanya Palkin"), to attain the rank of general, although in a completely alcoholized and debilitated state. Years later, Pishchenko followed in Strunin's footsteps – without, however, attaining the rank of general. The two of them first found common ground during their trip down the Volga, in their

passion for excessive consumption of alcohol.

In 1978, a world championship match was scheduled to take place in Baguio in the Philippines between the Soviet world champion Anatoly Karpov and the "defector" and "traitor to his homeland" (as he was referred to in the Soviet Union) challenger Viktor Kortschnoi. When he was still a young man and living in Leningrad, Karpov had been recruited as an agent of the KGB, operating under the code name "Raul." The choice of the code name had evidently been inspired by the recent revolution in Cuba, and as his moniker Karpov chose the name of Fidel Castro's brother, Raul. Not fully trusting the information about chess that he received from his subordinates in the Fifth Directorate, Andropov, the head of the KGB, had regular meetings with Karpov himself in order to stay fully informed about his problems and wishes, since Karpov was a favorite of the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Leonid Brezhnev. The outcome of these meetings was that Lieutenant General Filipp Bobkov, the head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, was instructed that Karpov had to remain the world chess champion.

Brezhnev was also interested in hockey. Andropov collected information for Brezhnev about the leading players, their athletic accomplishments, and their personal lives. This was done through Andropov's informers, who, like Karpov, were regularly invited to the office of the head of the KGB. But usually they met not with Andropov himself, but with Lieutenant Colonel Ernst Davnis, the deputy head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, who oversaw the USSR's select ice hockey team. For example, if Brezhnev became interested in the biathlon, Andropov would meet with his informer Valery Goncharov, a biathlon world champion and an officer of the KGB.

Events occasionally took an amusing turn. Once, in order to obtain a more complete picture of things, Andropov decided to talk directly to the head coach

of the USSR's select ice hockey team, Viktor Tikhonov. After receiving instructions from Andropov's office, Davnis summoned Tikhonov and informed him that the head of the KGB wished to meet with him. Hearing this disquieting news, Tikhonov fell sick. He came down with a bad case of diarrhea. For several days, he could not leave his apartment due to severe stomach troubles. As a consequence, on top of arranging a meeting between Tikhonov and Andropov, Davnis had to get lab tests performed on Tikhonov to make sure that Tikhonov was not suffering from some contagious disease that might endanger the head of the KGB.

Winter Olympics, Calgary 1988
Left to right: Vladimir Popov, Igor Dmitriev, Vyacheslav Koloskov, Leonid Tyagachev and Viktor Tikhonov

The outwardly quiet Karpov, who spoke in a high and not very manly voice, repeatedly met with Andropov without having any panic attacks. After their first meeting, Andropov, who had received instructions from Brezhnev to use any means necessary to prevent the "traitor Kortschnoi" from winning the world championship, ordered the creation of an "operational group" of KGB agents to accompany Karpov to the title match in Baguio in 1978. An officer from the Fifth Directorate who could provide security for Karpov and at the same time act as his personal driver, translator, and secretary, had to be selected from the Fifth Directorate.

During the search for a suitable candidate, Strunin (a.k.a. “Drunken Hedgehog”) reminded General Abramov (a.k.a. “Vanya Palkin”) that the directorate had an officer by the name of Pishchenko, who had experience as a professional driver, spoke Spanish and English, and had shown himself to advantage while accompanying a group of Cuban state security officers down the Volga. No better candidate was found, and Pishchenko was given the position. This decided Pishchenko’s fate for almost an entire decade: he literally became Anatoly Karpov’s shadow. Pishchenko not only made decisions that fell within his purview as a KGB agent, but also helped to resolve the personal and practical problems of the future world chess champion.

In addition to Pishchenko, the operational group formed on Andropov’s orders included officers from the First Main Directorate (PGU, foreign intelligence) who worked under cover at the Soviet embassy in Manila; the USSR’s trade representatives in the Philippines; and KGB agents working under cover as journalists. The group also included officers from the KGB’s Technical Operations Directorate (OTU), traveling abroad for the first time as part of a Soviet sports delegation. In all, the KGB operational group accompanying Karpov to the world championship as part of his team consisted of 12 people.

In keeping with a plan approved by the deputy head of the KGB, Viktor Chebrikov, Pishchenko was instructed to accompany Karpov at all times and to provide for his physical safety, as well as to establish “operational contacts” with the heads of the International Chess Federation and to feel them out for potential collaboration with the state security organs of the Soviet Union.

According to the general plan, Soviet intelligence agents were to take advantage of the chess championship – which would attract the attention of the world community – to cultivate already existing operational contacts with foreign citizens, as well as to recruit new agents that could be useful to Soviet intelligence. Directorate A of the KGB’s First Main Directorate had the task of

ensuring that the international media would cover the match in a positive light through Soviet agents and operational contacts among foreign journalists. In addition to Directorate A, the plan also involved Directorate P (foreign political intelligence) of the KGB's First Main Directorate and Directorate K (foreign counterintelligence), whose mission was to penetrate the security services and police forces of foreign countries by recruiting their representatives into the First Main Directorate of the KGB. To ensure stable contact with Moscow, the operational group relied on the capabilities of the Soviet foreign intelligence "rezidentura" – the clandestine KGB network – in Manila.

The duties of the officers from the Technical Operations Directorate who were part of Karpov's operational group included daily monitoring Karpov's health by regularly checking his stool and controlling his diet. They also had to provide for the security of the lodgings occupied by Karpov and the members of the operational group, and to secure their lodgings and telephones against possible attempts at bugging or wiretapping by foreign security services or private persons.

The Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate kept a file on Soviet grandmaster Boris Gulko, born in 1947. The crime of Gulko and his wife, the well-known Soviet chess player Anna Akhsharumova, consisted in their desire to leave the Soviet Union for permanent residence abroad, where they might acquire freedom and fitting monetary compensation for participating in international chess tournaments. Like all Soviet sportsmen, chess grandmasters received only a negligible part of the payments that were due to them, since a lion's share of their winnings went to the national treasury and to sports bureaucrats. Baturinsky, the effective head of the Soviet Chess Federation, informed the Department of Agitation and Propaganda (Gramov) and the KGB that, should Gulko acquire permanent residence abroad, as a strong and sufficiently young grandmaster he would be able to offer assistance to the

“renegade” Kortschnoi in his fight for the world championship title against Karpov. For Gulko, this turned out to be a prison sentence.

In connection with Gulko, the KGB enacted a whole complex of operational and technical measures. Despite the apparent might of the KGB, the capacities of this vast organization were far from unlimited.

Anna Akhsharumova, c.1976

It was always difficult for the operational subdivisions to find a clandestine “station” for listening in on telephone conversations, which was known as Measure S or T (auditory monitoring). These measures were implemented by the Twelfth Department of the KGB to serve the needs of the KGB’s operational subdivisions.

The Twelfth Department was headquartered in Varsanovyevsky Lane, across from the KGB’s central clinic, and there was an obvious element of dissimulation in this department’s name, since it employed more agents than some of the KGB’s operational directorates, for example, the Fifth Directorate. And although the Twelfth Department had a large number of agents who worked hard at their job, the capacities of this department always fell short of the needs of the KGB’s operational subdivisions. It was only an article of faith in the

Soviet Union that the KGB was listening in on virtually all of its citizens. It would have done so if it could have, but the means were lacking.

Surveillance of “targets of operational interest” was organized in a similar fashion. Each directorate that carried out operational activities had attached to it a corresponding department of the Seventh Directorate, whose employees would serve the needs of the operational directorates by implementing provision NN (surveillance). Attached to the Fifth Directorate was the Third Department of the Seventh Directorate, which specialized in the surveillance of dissidents. Acting on orders received from Gramov at the Department of Propaganda, the KGB – using the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate – swooped down on grandmaster Gulko. In their campaign against him, the operational subdivisions of Soviet state security made use of every means that they had at their disposal.

And so, the head of the KGB, Andropov, his deputy, Lieutenant General Chebrikov, the head of the Fifth Directorate, Lieutenant General Bobkov, and the deputy head of the Fifth Directorate, Major General Abramov – all of them acting on instructions received ultimately from Brezhnev himself – embarked on an operation to secure victory in the battle for the title of world chess champion to Anatoly Karpov.

Much lower ranking “chess players” from state security included Colonel Boris Shvedov, head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate and a former protégé of General Abramov; Colonel Pavel Zimin, deputy head of the Eleventh Department; Colonel Boris Tarasov, head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department; and his deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Ernst Davnis. Chess was overseen directly by Major Vladimir Lavrov, senior operative in the Third Division, known in the sports circles of the time as “Little Vermin” (“Gadenysh”).

In the mid-1970s, Vyacheslav Ivannikov, an officer in the Third Department of the KGB's Second Main Directorate who monitored the French embassy in Moscow, informed Lavrov that his department had obtained evidence of recurring contacts between the Soviet grandmaster Boris Spassky and a female employee of the French embassy. Spassky's French friend was the granddaughter of a czarist army general who had fled from Russia to France after the Revolution of 1917. While living in France, the general had taken part in the activities of foreign anti-Soviet organizations and was an active member of the French division of the People's Labor Union (NTS), which waged an uncompromising struggle against the Communist regime in the Soviet Union.

His granddaughter, born in France to a family of Russian émigrés, grew up loving the Russian language and the culture of the land that her ancestors had been forced to leave, and developed a hatred for the Communist regime that had installed itself on the territory of the former Russian empire. After receiving an excellent education at the Sorbonne, she took up her grandfather's cause and became an active participant in the French division of the NTS, thus inevitably attracting the attention of the state security services of the USSR. The KGB informed the Central Committee in writing, in a letter signed by Andropov, about Boris Spassky's disgraceful behavior that consisted of his having a relationship with an employee of the French embassy in Moscow. On instructions from the leadership of the KGB, the Fifth and Second Main Directorates put together a plan to exert a "positive influence" on Spassky and to expose the anti-Soviet activities of his French friend, subsequently discrediting her through publications in the Soviet and foreign press.

In accordance with this plan, the Fifth Directorate used its agent network among Soviet grandmasters and chess functionaries – including such world-famous chess players as Tigran Petrosian, Oleg Romanishin, and Lev Polugaevsky in the first of these groups, and Baturinsky, the director of the Central Chess Club, and

Alexander Roshal, the editor-in-chief of the magazine *64 – Chess Review*, in the second – to exert psychological pressure on Boris Spassky in order to force him to break off relations with his French friend.

In consort with the Fifth Directorate, and with approval from the leadership of the KGB, the Second Main Directorate worked out a plan to infect Spassky's friend with a venereal disease. Agents from the Third Department of the Second Main Directorate were to penetrate into the residential building occupied by French embassy employees and covertly to enter the apartment occupied by Spassky's friend. Then, they were to infect her undergarments. The pubic lice would be procured from one of Moscow's dermatological-venereal medical centers.

The operation was a rather complicated undertaking. In order to avoid detection, it was necessary to establish the daily schedule not just of Spassky's friend, but also of her neighbors. On the day of the operation, all of them were kept under strict surveillance in order to prevent any of them from unexpectedly showing up at their place of residence, which would have ruined everything.

Major Ivankin, who was directly responsible for executing the operation, was very nervous while he was carrying it out. His nervousness was due not so much to the fact that he was secretly penetrating into the residential quarters of a foreign citizen, as to his fear of becoming infected with the pubic lice himself. Had Major Ivankin actually become infected, his wife would have been unlikely to believe that her husband had picked up a case of pubic lice while doing his duty for his homeland.

Ivankin did not become infected. But, to the displeasure of his superiors and colleagues from the Fifth Directorate, neither did Spassky's friend. Either the lice were defective, or Ivankin had deposited them in the wrong place, or the Spassky's French friend had become suspicious and washed her clothes.

The facts were not comforting: a plan approved by the leadership of the KGB had not been realized. The participants of the operation were forced to start over. Once again, they ordered supplies from the dermatological-venereal medical center. This time, however, they acquired a more serious infectious agent, gonorrhea. Thus armed, the chekists launched another attack against the amorous pair. And once again, Major Ivankin with trembling hands emptied the contents of the small glass vials onto the French woman's undergarments; and once again, he was forced to subject himself and his wife to the threat of infection as well.

Ivankin's superiors duly appreciated his valor. For the courage displayed by him in carrying out his mission, Major Ivankin was awarded a certificate of merit from the KGB, signed by the head of the KGB, Andropov. The certificate of merit stated: "For carrying out a special assignment."

Spassky's friend left Moscow for Paris. Spassky soon followed, marrying his beloved and staying on in France. Spassky never returned to the Soviet Union.

After losing their battle with Spassky, the "chess players" from the KGB resolved to get even in their battle with Kortschnoi. Kortschnoi, who had sufficiently extensive experience with fighting the Soviet system and knew about Boris Spassky's problems prior to his departure from the USSR, chose the only possible and correct path for himself, although one that was not easy for him or his relatives. He defected during one of his trips abroad.

After Kortschnoi's defection, a wave of reports in the Soviet media branded him as a "renegade." This media campaign was initiated by Soviet state security.

Spassky's departure and Kortschnoi's defection were not the KGB's only defeats in the sports arena in 1976. The Summer Olympics in Montreal also caused the KGB a great deal of trouble. It was an established rule that Soviet sports delegations and tourist groups for sports experts and journalists should include

undercover state security officers. These state security officers would constitute an “operational group” from the KGB. Major General Abramov, the then-deputy head of the Fifth Directorate, was placed in charge of such a delegation during the Summer Olympics. The operational group headed by Abramov consisted of thirteen people. It was assisted by agents from the KGB’s local rezidentura, operating undercover in the USSR’s consulate in Montreal.

Abramov (who traveled to Canada under the assumed name of Zalomov, an active participant of the revolutionary movement in Russia, the prototype of the hero of Maxim Gorky’s famous novel *Mother*) and his deputy in the group, Vladimir Lavrov (a.k.a. “Little Vermin”), promoted a fortress-under-siege atmosphere within the Soviet delegation. One of their victims was the eighteen-year-old diver Sergey Nemtsanov, whose guilt consisted in the fact that he had received two letters from an American female diver, a member of the U.S. Olympic team. The two athletes had become acquainted and spent time together on several occasions during the Montreal Olympics.

For the KGB, this was enough. The decision was made to return Nemtsanov to the Soviet Union prematurely on a spurious pretext, not allowing him to complete his performance at the Olympics. In response, Nemtsanov decided to defect. He left the Olympic Village in which the participants of the games were quartered and for several months hid out on one of the numerous islands in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. He was hidden by friends, Canadian athletes.

The Soviet media launched a major propaganda campaign, accusing Western countries of waging an ideological war against the Soviet Union by enticing Soviet athletes to run away from the USSR. At the same time, the KGB pressured Nemtsanov’s parents and friends, who, through the press, called on him to return to his homeland. Nemtsanov returned and, prior to the collapse of the USSR, never took part in international competitions again.

For a number of years, the outstanding Soviet figure skaters Ludmila Belousova and Oleg Protopopov came under pressure from Soviet sports functionaries. The harassment campaign against them was again initiated by the KGB, which did not like their independence, their extensive contacts with foreign athletes and representatives of foreign sports circles and media.

“Little Vermin” kept on writing reports about the skaters’ negative attitudes toward Soviet reality, about their admiration for the Western way of life. On the basis of these reports, memos were prepared for the Central Committee, which then gave orders to the State Sports Committee to clamp down on the couple. The consequences were not slow in coming. In 1979, during a trip to Switzerland, Belousova and Protopopov defected. When in 1988, at the Calgary Olympics, the famous duo was invited to participate in an exhibition performance along with other former Olympic champions and prizewinners, the head of the State Sports Committee, Gramov, told the Canadian organizers of the event that if Belousova and Protopopov came out on the ice, the Soviet delegation would boycott the closing ceremony at the Olympics. Belousova and Protopopov did not come out on the ice. In 1996, they obtained Swiss citizenship. They did not return to Russia even after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In 1972, at the Summer Olympic games in Munich, the seventeen-year-old Soviet gymnast Olga Korbut captured the hearts of millions of people around the world by becoming an Olympic champion and winning three gold medals and one silver. Korbut personified youth, beauty, grace. For many years, her name became synonymous with the triumph of beauty and the human spirit.

For a number of years after Korbut’s victory at the Munich Olympics, authoritative international organizations and television corporations called her the best athlete of recent years. In 1975, UNESCO named Korbut “Woman of the Year.”

At the 1976 Olympic games in Montreal, Korbut once again became an Olympic champion, winning a team gold medal and an individual silver one. A year later, she ended her gymnastic career. She was only 22. She could have continued delighting sports lovers around the world for a long time to come with her splendid artistry. But there were reasons that forced her to give up professional sports. The reasons were so serious that even many years later, having immigrated to the United States, she would not risk talking about them.

Korbut became enormously popular around the world. In many countries, numerous sports clubs were named after her. She was most popular in the United States, where a literal cult of Olga Korbut sprang up, her admirers numbering in the millions.

Korbut's popularity around the globe, and especially in the United States, put the KGB on alert – above all, it put on alert the overseer of the KGB's gymnastics directorate, Captain Lavrov. Lavrov and then-major Anatoly Smaznov started to submit negative information about Olga Korbut to the Central Committee. As a consequence, following the Central Committee's orders, Olga Korbut was placed under the vigilant eyes of the Fifth Department of the Byelorussian KGB (Korbut lived in Byelorussia). The KGB opened an "operational check file" on her and, contrary to agency instructions, kept it open for many years. Korbut's long-term coach Knysh was recruited as an agent of the state security organs and reported literally his charge's every move to his supervisors at the Fifth Department of the Byelorussian KGB, omitting to mention his own cruel treatment of her and the fact that he was systematically raping her. In effect, Knysh had turned Korbut into his sex slave. Knysh had been recruited on the initiative of Vladimir Lavrov of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Armed with the support of state security and the party, Knysh did everything he

could to subjugate the young, talented athlete. The KGB always listened in on Korbut's telephone conversations and the apartments in which she lived were always bugged. She would be under surveillance for months on end. All of her friends and acquaintances likewise came into the state security organs' field of vision. The Fifth Department of the Byelorussian KGB carried out a whole complex of operations in connection with Olga Korbut's close friend and member of the popular musical ensemble "Pesnyary," Leonid Bortkevich, who later became her husband. Top officials from the Byelorussian Sports Committee and from the Department of Agitation and Propaganda at the Central Committee of the Byelorussian Communist Party conducted regular instructional conversations with Korbut herself. For a number of years, this outstanding athlete was prevented on various pretexts from traveling abroad. For many years, until she emigrated to the United States, Korbut was persecuted by the KGB-CPSU machine.

The practice of recruiting coaches, athletes, and sports functionaries for the KGB was quite widespread, particularly during the preparations for the Moscow Olympics in 1980. Before the Olympics, the Eleventh Department of the KGB's Fifth Directorate, which had previously had a little over 30 agents, was expanded to include 350 officers, drawn from other subdivisions of the KGB. Most of them worked on recruiting new agents and supervising them. The officers from the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate alone recruited over 300 agents. Athletes were easily vulnerable, since they belonged to the category of people who needed to travel abroad to participate in competitions. Coaches were easy prey, too, because they wanted to travel abroad along with their charges. And bureaucrats were likewise not difficult to recruit because they simply wanted to travel abroad. Any trip abroad, in Soviet times, promised definite material benefits. This was particularly true of the sports sector. In addition to *per diem* expenses, athletes were provided with "equipment." Equipment included free athletic clothing for members of Soviet teams, as well as

indispensable accessories and outwear – suits, coats, fur coats (depending on the time of year), headgear, and footgear. Therefore, a trip to the Winter Olympics was the most coveted prize of all. The cost of the equipment that was given to an athletes on such a trip was comparable to the cost of a Zhiguli, a fashionable Soviet car. And it was all given to them for free. Whether or not an athlete would be allowed to travel abroad was decided exclusively by the KGB. It stands to reason that recruiting an athlete was much easier than recruiting any other Soviet person, who did not travel abroad and had nothing to lose by refusing to collaborate.

The complete list of famous athletes, coaches, and sports functionaries recruited by the KGB would consist of several hundred names. The KGB's agents included the coach of the Soviet women's tennis team, Tarpischev; the coach of the Soviet boxing team, Koptsev; the vice president of the International Amateur Boxing Association, Gordienko; the head of the Winter Sports Directorate, Panov; and others.

Tarpischev, Shamil – senior coach of the Soviet women's tennis team, recruited into the KGB in 1980 by Albina Demodova, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Koptsev, Konstantin – official coach of the Soviet boxing team, recruited in 1987 by Vladimir Toporyni.

Gordienko, Vladimir – vice president of the International Amateur Boxing Association (IABA), recruited in 1979 by Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. Code name: Danya. Gordienko was used as a resident agent for working with Soviet boxers and AIBA members.

Panov, German – head of the Winter Sports Directorate at the State Sports

Committee of the USSR, council member of the International Skating Union, recruited in 1979 by Fyodor Volkov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. Code name: Yulya.

Parkhomenko – head of the Combat Sports Directorate, recruited in 1982 into the KGB Directorate for the Novosibirsk Region. Code name: Diopter. Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, worked with Parkhomenko.

Gorokhova, Galina – member of the executive committee of the Russian Olympic Committee, head of the Russian Athletes' Union, recruited in 1980 by Vladimir Kuleshov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Khotochkin, Viktor – first deputy president of the Russian Olympic Committee, recruited in 1977 by Vladimir Lavrov, an officer of the Fifth Directorate.

Sharandin, Yuri – in the mid-1980s, head of the Protocol Department at the State Sports Committee of the USSR, former official at the Directorate of Propaganda at the State Sports Committee, recruited in 1979 by Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. Sharandin was used as a KGB resident agent who supervised the agents among the translators who accompanied sports delegations. Currently, Sharandin is the head of the Committee on Constitutional Legislation in the Federation Council of Russia.

Sysoyev, Valery – deputy head and then head of the Central Council of Dynamo, deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the USSR, recruited in 1979 by Filipp Bobkov, head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.

Koloskov, Vyacheslav – head of the Soccer and Hockey Directorate at the

State Sports Committee of the USSR, vice president of FIFA, recruited in 1978 by Ernst Davnis, deputy head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Steblin, Alexander – head of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, recruited in 1988 by the KGB Directorate for Moscow and the Moscow Region. Code name: Moskvich.

Markov, Gennady – head of the Biomedical Support Directorate for Soviet Teams, recruited in 1978 by Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. Code name: Genin.

The story of Leonid Drachevsky, who was the senior coach for the Soviet crew team in 1980, is telling. Drachevsky was recruited as an agent in 1979 by Valentin Nefedov, an officer temporarily delegated to the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. Drachevsky was able to establish good relations with the deputy head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Igor Perfiliev, during their trip to the Universiade in Mexico in 1979. This set the stage for his unprecedented career growth. In 1986, Drachevsky became deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the RSFSR. By 1991, he was already the first deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the USSR. In 1992, he entered the diplomatic service (as Russian consul in Barcelona during the Olympics). Subsequently, Drachevsky was appointed head of a department at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; during the years 1996-1998, he served as Russian ambassador to Poland; and then as Russian deputy foreign minister. Between 2000 and 2004, he was the plenipotentiary representative of the Russian president in the Siberian Federal District (replaced by General Kvashnin).

A place in the KGB's agent network did not necessarily protect sportsmen if they

happened to become the victims of a big political game in sports. Thus, the KGB began to harass and persecute the founder of the Soviet school of karate, Alexei Shturmin, whose guilt consisted of his charismatic personality and prodigious organizational talent. Over a short period of time, Shturmin and his associate Tadeush Kasyanov created a wide network of karate schools in Moscow and around the country. Soviet state security personnel also started learning this martial art. The karate classes at the Dynamo Sports Association, where officers from the KGB and the Ministry of Internal Affairs improved their hand-to-hand combat skills, were taught by Shturmin's students. Shturmin conducted a vast campaign to promote karate, making presentations with his students for KGB agents and the public.

However, neither his activity and fame in the Soviet Union and abroad, nor his honorary post as cultural attaché to the Dutch embassy in Moscow, nor even the fact that Shturmin was part of the agent network of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB, saved him from the system for which he had agreed to work – from the KGB. In the early 1980s, Shturmin was arrested by the Fifth Directorate on charges of distributing pornography. In reality, Shturmin had videotaped sexual scenes with his female friends, with their consent and "for personal use."

When Shturmin's apartment was searched, Major Nikolai Tsaregorodtsev and Oleg Nikulich – senior agents of the Thirteenth Department of the Fifth Directorate – confiscated a collection of rare wines that Shturmin had assembled over many years. Since the wine collection did not form a part of the material evidence in the criminal case against him, Shturmin naturally began to demand its restitution. The problem was that by the time that Shturmin had filed his request, there was nothing left to restitute. Tsaregorodtsev and Nikulich had already consumed the whole of the collection (they accounted for their actions by claiming to have received instructions to destroy the wines). In the early 1990s, while vacationing in the Crimea and staying in a hotel belonging to a

former colleague from the Fifth Directorate, Nikolai Tsaregorodtsev died of congestive heart failure – his destructive passion for alcohol had taken its toll. His body was brought back to Moscow by his friend and drinking buddy Oleg Nikulich, who died soon after of the same cause. At the time of their deaths, both men were less than 50 years old.

Shturmin's removal from the sports arena marked the beginning of a broad campaign to wipe out karate in the USSR. The Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate had an embedded agent in sports circles named Dmitry Ivanov. In the past, he had been a world weightlifting champion. However, once he left sports, Ivanov became a heavy drinker. Once, while inebriated, he seriously roughed up some unfortunate offender. The consequences were unfortunate for Ivanov – a criminal charge of disorderly conduct and several years in prison. By agreeing to become a KGB agent, Ivanov was able with the KGB's help to come back to Moscow to his apartment in an upscale building on Gorky Street (now Tverskaya Street), which he had received from the state in return for his distinguished service in sports. Knowing to whom he owed the opportunity to return to normal life, Ivanov became a loyal agent of state security. With the KGB's help, he obtained a position as special correspondent for the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport*, where on orders from state security he wrote and published an article entitled "Warning: Karate-Eaters," which resonated with the Soviet public.

On top of this, the KGB systematically informed the Central Committee of the CPSU about attempts by foreign security services to penetrate Soviet state security through a "foreign," ideological form of sports, karate, one of whose basic premises is unquestioning submission to a sensei (teacher). As a result of the KGB's campaign to thwart the development of karate in the USSR, on November 10, 1981, the Presidium of the Supreme Council passed Decree No. 6/24: "Administrative and Criminal Liability for Breaking the Rules of Karate

Instruction." Furthermore, articles were introduced into the criminal and administrative law codes of the USSR that established criminal and administrative liability for unlawful karate instruction. And on May 17, 1984, the State Sports Committee of the USSR passed Order No. 404, prohibiting karate instruction in sports associations. For many years, karate, a martial art enjoyed by millions of people, was forbidden in the Soviet Union.

In 1978, Leonid Tyagachev, the senior coach of the USSR downhill ski team, who had been recruited as an agent by Lavrov and bore the code name "Elbrus," was arrested at the customs desk in Sheremetyevo International Airport while attempting to smuggle a contraband shipment of blue jeans into the country – about 200 pairs in all, packed in boxes for ski boots.

> *Tyagachev, Leonid – head of the Soviet Olympic Committee, recruited in 1976 by Vladimir Lavrov, an officer of the First Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate. Code name: Elbrus.*

Customs officials brought charges against Tyagachev for an attempt at large-scale smuggling. In the Soviet Union, blue jeans could be bought only on the black market and were prohibitively expensive. The Soviet textile industry did not produce blue jeans.

According to KGB agency rules, the handler (in this instance, Lavrov) was fully responsible for his agent's actions. However, Lavrov, who had on numerous occasions received expensive downhill skiing equipment for free from his agent Tyagachev, had not forgotten to share the gifts with his superiors. Consequently, he was not punished for the illegal actions of his agent. Tyagachev was also shaken but unhurt. He was transferred to the Sports Committee of the RSFSR and for several years forbidden to travel abroad. At present, Tyagachev (Elbrus) occupies a lofty position as president of the Russian Olympic Committee.

Just how complex the hierarchical-bureaucratic structure of the KGB was, and just how seriously it pursued the slightest deviations from protocol and orders, can be illustrated by an episode that involved a man who participated in the operation to arrest Tyagachev at the airport – another agent of the same Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Mikhail Monastyrsky (code name: Vladimirov), who was the director of the State Sports Committee's international mountain climbing camps. Shortly after helping out with Tyagachev's arrest, Monastyrsky (Vladimirov) was sent to the United States by the State Sports Committee of the USSR. One day, Monastyrsky went to deliver a report to the USSR's consulate general in New York and, not thinking about the consequences, handed this report to a "clean" employee of the consulate, i.e., an employee who had no connections with Soviet foreign intelligence organs. In other words, Monastyrsky blew his cover as a KGB agent in the United States.

A panic began. On the same day, an encrypted telegram was sent by the Soviet foreign intelligence rezidentura at the USSR's consulate in New York to the First Department of the First Main Directorate of the KGB in Moscow. The telegram, which was signed by the deputy resident agent, informed the home office about Monastyrsky's visit to the consulate and about his conversation with the "clean" employee. The telegram also noted that the conversation had taken place at a location that was not secured (against bugging by American security services), which in the opinion of the rezidentura constituted a gross violation of the rules of clandestinity on the part of agent Vladimirov (Monastyrsky). The rezidentura demanded that agents traveling to the United States undergo more thorough training, and it requested that a warning be issued to Monastyrsky.

After receiving the encrypted telegram, the First Main Directorate forwarded a copy of it to the Second Main Directorate, whose Thirteenth Department was in charge of organizing foreign assignments for counterintelligence operatives and

agents from counterintelligence agencies. For many years, the Thirteenth Department of the Second Main Directorate was headed by Colonel Guk, who had previously been a resident agent of Soviet foreign intelligence in London. When the Soviet spy Gordievsky, who had been Guk's deputy, went over to the British side, Guk's career was irreparably damaged. It ended at a department bearing the unlucky number "13," in the rank of colonel. Had Guk stayed on in London as a resident agent of Soviet foreign intelligence, he would have become a general.

The Second Main Directorate forwarded the encrypted telegram to the Fifth Directorate, to whose agent network agent Vladimirov (Monastyrsky) belonged. After receiving the encrypted telegram, the deputy head of the Fifth Directorate, Major General Abramov ("Vanya Palkin") gave orders immediately to remove agent Vladimirov from the agent network, and to punish his supervising officer.

A review of agent Vladimirov's work began. It was established that he had previously traveled abroad numerous times, that he had successfully completed his assignments and had a clean record, and that he believed that at the consulate in New York he had met with a foreign intelligence officer in a location equipped in accordance with all the rules of clandestinity. In the end, Monastyrsky was retained in the agent network.

One of the people who worked on Monastyrsky's case was Valery Balyasnikov (nicknamed "Balyas"). In his youth, Balyasnikov had been a soccer player, playing as a second stringer for Dynamo's famous goalkeeper Lev Yashin. Because of Yashin's athletic prowess, Balyasnikov was unable fully to display his own skills as a goalkeeper. After becoming a state security officer, he traveled abroad many times with Soviet teams in various kinds of sports, attending the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo in 1984 with the Soviet luge team, in Mexico in 1986 with the Soviet soccer team, and various other events.

Winter Olympics, Sarajevo 1984
Left to right: Unidentified KGB Agent, Mikhail Nozhkin, Vladimir Popov and Valery Balyasnikov

In February 1984, a group of KGB officers traveled to the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo as part of the Soviet Olympic team. Their mission was to protect Soviet athletes against possible terrorist attacks. The leader of the group was the young head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Lieutenant Colonel Igor Perfiliev, Bobkov's protégé. The group also included Vladimir "Little Vermin" Lavrov from the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Lavrov constantly sent reports to his superiors, including General Abramov, about the allegedly unhealthy atmosphere that had developed in the Soviet figure skating team. These reports, which were stamped as "top secret" and contained the names of agents and informers, were filled with detailed descriptions of the relations between the coaches Chaykovskaya, Tarasova, and Dubova, and their relations with Stanislav Zhuk. Zhuk, who had an excessive fondness for alcohol, often became involved in scandals. He was a member of the armed forces, represented the Central Sports Club of the Army, and he was also an agent of the Third Directorate of the KGB. In his reports to the KGB, Zhuk painted a

relatively objective picture of what was going on in the Soviet figure skating team, which contradicted the information being sent by Lavrov. For this reason, Lavrov did everything he could to expel Zhuk from the Soviet team, in which Zhuk, as coach, occupied a position of authority because of the achievements of his charges. The brightest star among these charges was the outstanding Soviet figure skater Irina Rodnina, a many-time Olympic champion, who also won the European and world championships and captured a total of 24 gold medals.

Lavrov also attempted to collect various kinds of compromising information about another coach, Chaykovskaya. Chaykovskaya's husband, after moving from Kiev to Moscow, was for many years the head of the publishing house *Fizkultura i Sport* ("Physical Culture and Sports"). Lavrov disliked Chaykovskaya because when Chaykovskaya's husband was working in Kiev, he had become friendly with an officer of the Ukrainian KGB, Boyarov, and soon became his agent. Several years later, Boyarov was transferred to Moscow, where he became a general and deputy head of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB. His friend and agent Chaykovsky followed Boyarov to Moscow.

Lavrov's enemies also included the figure skating coach Dubova. Dubova's husband was the head of the personnel directorate at the State Sports Committee. Lavrov had made repeated and rude attempts to interfere into the personnel policy of the country's main sports agency and by no means always saw eye to eye with Dubov in this matter. As a result, Lavrov made himself another couple of enemies, the Dubovs. And although, as a famous coach, Dubova was not an easy target for Lavrov, he did manage to get her spouse expelled from the Sports Committee.

Since while they were abroad at various international competitions the figure skaters and their coaches actively interacted with their foreign colleagues and with Belousova and Protopopov, who had defected from the Soviet Union, the KGB began thinking about recruiting someone among the figure skaters for its

agent network. It found the people it was looking for in the outstanding couple of ice dancers Natalia Linichuk and Gennady Karponosov.

Linichuk, Natalia – recruited in 1980 by Vladimir Lavrov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate.

Karponosov, Gennady – recruited in 1983 by Sergey Kapytov, an officer of the Fifteenth Department of the Fifth Directorate.

In order to stay informed about the Soviet figure skating team, the KGB also enlisted the help of its "friends." In KGB terminology, "friends" referred to the state security organs of the Warsaw Pact countries. The KGB appointed Major Evgeny Auzhbikovich, senior officer at the Second Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate, as the man responsible for coordinating the activities of the departments of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB and the various subdivisions of the security services of the other socialist states.

Soon, a group was formed which bore the name "Group for Coordinating Work with Friends" and which lasted until the downfall of socialism in Europe. Auzhbikovich became the first head of this group (he was later replaced by senior officer Major Larionov). The group was supervised at the Fifth Directorate by Major General Abramov.

Auzhbikovich, who was stubborn by nature and did not get along with his direct superiors, Strunin and his deputy Beteyev (who later became generals), found a sure way to win the heart of General Abramov. He unhesitatingly wrote off all of the money spent by Abramov – under article 9, working expenses – on meals and expensive gifts for everyone in whom Abramov had an interest. In this way, Auzhbikovich became a reliable person for Abramov and, as a token of gratitude, he received from Abramov an appointment to serve for a couple of years abroad, from where he regularly sent Abramov gifts costing thousands of

dollars (which was a lot of money back then). After returning to the Soviet Union, Auzhbikovich bought himself a fashionable Volga automobile and a dacha near Moscow. One day, while driving to his dacha in his Volga, he and his wife were killed in a car accident.

It was Auzhbikovich who, in the mid-1980s, carrying out General Abramov's instructions, sent an encrypted telegram to Lieutenant General Markus in Department XX of the East German Ministry of State Security, with a request from the leadership of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB to expand the East German agent network among the members of the East German figure skating team. The KGB also wished to begin conducting joint operations with a view to investigating the members of the teams of the two countries and the foreign citizens who came in contact with Soviet and East German athletes. In response to this request, East German state security (Stasi) took immediate action to expand its agent network, recruiting, among others, the outstanding East German figure skater Katarina Witt. Prior to the collapse of socialism in East Germany, Witt was actively used as a Stasi agent, taking part in joint operations with the KGB to gather intelligence for the protection of East German and Soviet athletes during the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo in 1984 and in Calgary in 1988.

Witt herself was also kept under intensive surveillance by the East German security services, which feared that she might defect to West Germany. Department XX of the Stasi kept a file on her. The officers who were Witt's handlers in state security were at the same time conducting a thorough investigation of her, keeping her under daily surveillance, listening in on her telephone calls, reading her mail. Witt's file at the Stasi contained thousands of pages of reports and numerous photographs and video footage, including materials that showed her intimate contacts.

When in 1979 during the preparations for the Moscow Olympics the staff of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB

was expanded, a new officer appeared in it, Captain Vladimir Kuleshov. Kuleshov had been transferred from the Seventh Directorate of the KGB, which was in charge of organizing surveillance of “targets of operational interest,” above all during diplomatic receptions arranged by the Soviet foreign ministry.

Kuleshov was born in 1941. His father had been a career military officer. During the Battle of Stalingrad, as a colonel commanding a division, he had died a heroic death and was posthumously awarded the title of “Hero of the Soviet Union.” Colonel Kuleshov left behind two sons. Both sons were educated in Suvorov Military Schools, which were created during the war for the children of killed servicemen. The older son followed in his father’s footsteps and reached great heights: in the 1980s, as a colonel general, he headed one of the main directorates of the Soviet defense ministry. The younger Kuleshov liked sports from a young age and devoted all of his free time to them. He became a master of sports in the pentathlon. However, he was a poor student and graduated from high school at age 21.

The influential older brother helped the failing younger one to stay in school until graduation. But when the younger Kuleshov finally left school, he was an ignorant and illiterate man. In this difficult situation, the older brother found a life-saving solution: the Physical Culture Institute. During his first year at the institute, Vladimir Kuleshov got married. Soon, the young couple had a daughter, and in another couple of years, another. The Kuleshovs were not just poor: they were impoverished. When Vladimir graduated from the institute at age 27, his stepfather, who was the director of the publishing house *Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya* (“International Relations”) and a member of the collegium of the foreign ministry, found a job at the foreign ministry for his stepson. Soon, Kuleshov and his family were sent on a prolonged assignment to Sweden, where Kuleshov became the bursar at the Soviet embassy in Stockholm.

Outside the Soviet Union, networks of resident agents, rezidenturas, operated in every Soviet embassy. Every rezidentura (with the exception of that of the Main Intelligence Directorate, the GRU, whose operatives were supervised by military counterintelligence) included representatives of the “K” Directorate of the First Main Directorate of the KGB, which was in charge of foreign intelligence around the world, including the monitoring of embassy employees by KGB agents working undercover at the embassy. Thus, the officers from the “K” Directorate had the task of penetrating the police forces and intelligence agencies of the countries to which they were sent. It was this directorate that recruited the bursar of the Soviet embassy in Sweden, Kuleshov, into the KGB.

Kuleshov’s stay in Sweden was nearing its end. On his handlers’ advice, even before he left Sweden Kuleshov began attending English classes at the Soviet embassy. Armed with a promise from his handlers from the “K” Directorate that they would support him, the 33-year-old Kuleshov returned to Moscow to serve in the KGB. Now, he was no longer impoverished. Upon his return, he bought a cooperative apartment on Leninsky Prospect for his family and purchased a Zhiguli automobile.

Kuleshov was admitted into the KGB as an exception. He was short and thus did not meet the physical requirements for service in state security. In addition, the cut-off age at which people were admitted for service in the KGB was 33, since otherwise they simply did not have enough time to serve the number of years required for a pension (lieutenant colonels usually worked until the age of 50, colonels until the age of 55). For this reason, once he became an officer of the Seventh Directorate, Kuleshov was not sent to work together with most of his colleagues, who were involved in organizing surveillance on Moscow’s streets at all times of the year. Instead, he was directed to an elite subdivision that was in charge of surveillance at official receptions organized by the Soviet foreign ministry for the diplomatic representatives of foreign countries (these receptions

took place indoors and provided agents with opportunities to help themselves to delicacies from the tables set up for the representatives of the diplomatic corps).

In time, Kuleshov attained the rank of captain. In 1979, he was transferred to the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, where he acquired the alias “Cigarette Butt” (“Okurok”) among his colleagues. It was to “Cigarette Butt” that Lavrov handed off the position of overseer of chess – and he did so with great relief, because he himself had had enough of the game. In this way, this most intellectual of sports in the world, whose most brilliant representatives were for many years Soviet chess players, ended up subordinated to an ignoramus. Lavrov was getting out of chess because almost no KGB officers were sent abroad with chess teams, which were few in number. The position of traveling companion to Anatoly Karpov, the world champion, was firmly occupied by agent Pishchenko. The Soviet government had no plans to have any other champions. And Lavrov had no use for chess without foreign trips.

Kuleshov’s subdivision was headed by a veteran officer of the state security organs, Boris Tarasov. Not much older than 50, he had “39 years of service” behind him. Born in Moscow, at the age of 18 Boris Tarasov was enlisted into the state security organs and sent to serve in Magadan. His assignment was not an accident. The directorate in which he was to serve was headed by his father. Tarasov served in Magadan for over 20 years, and since this city is located within the Arctic Circle, every year spent in this area counted for one and a half years of service. During this time, Tarasov, working in subdivisions involved in fighting anti-Soviet movements, attained the rank of colonel and the position of head of the Fifth Department of the KGB Directorate for the Magadan Region.

The Magadan Region was the site of a large number of labor camps where individuals who had been charged under article 58 (“anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda”) were serving their sentences. The prisoners included a large

number of famous people. Among them was Vadim Kozin, singer of Russian romances and songs. In order to survive in the Stalinist camps, Kozin was compelled to become an agent of state security. For many years, his handler was Boris Tarasov.

Over the years, Kozin and Tarasov became friends, and Kozin gave Tarasov a large number of his photographs and autographed records as tokens of his friendship. Work in the KGB's agent network and friendship with Tarasov, who had become head of the Fifth Department, helped Kozin to get released before the end of his term. Subsequently, he was rehabilitated. However, he stayed on for the rest of his life in Magadan, where he was eventually buried.

Prolonged service under the extreme conditions of the Far North had consequences for Colonel Tarasov as well. At 49, his hair was completely gray and he had none of his own teeth. But thanks to his good relations with the head of the Fifth Directorate, Lieutenant General Bobkov, Tarasov was transferred to Moscow and appointed deputy head of the First Division of the Ninth Department of the Fifth Directorate. This department handled the cases of famous Soviet dissidents: Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov, Pyotr Yakir, Viktor Krasin, and many others. The department was supervised by Bobkov personally, and none of his deputies dared to interfere in the department's affairs.

The First Division, to which Tarasov was appointed, was in charge of the file of Andrei Sakharov. The KGB spared no efforts to make the Sakharovs' lives miserable. In order to prevent them from getting around in their own car, the car's cooling system was repeatedly broken; the Sakharovs could not drive anywhere, since the motor would overheat and stop. The locks on the car doors were periodically filled with epoxy, which was very difficult to remove. The list of such "pranks" went on and on.

During the hunger strike that Sakharov declared in protest against the Soviet government – which was forcibly keeping him and his wife, Yelena Bonner, in internal exile in the city of Gorky (now Nizhny Novgorod) – the KGB issued orders to have Sakharov and Bonner hospitalized. The main purpose of putting them in a hospital was to limit their contacts with the outside world and to prevent Western reporters from gaining access to them.

For surveillance purposes, two senior state security operatives were put in Bonner's hospital room, Major Galina Nevstruyeva and Major Albina (Alla) Demidova. They kept watch over Bonner day and night, recording her actions and intercepting the notes that she wrote to the outside world. Previously, these women had worked as surveillance officers at the Seventh Directorate of the KGB; subsequently, they had been transferred to the Fifth Directorate to serve under Bobkov. Nevstruyeva served in the directorate's Ninth Department, Demidova in the Eleventh Department.

By agreement with KGB Chairman Andropov, Ninth Department operatives who handled the cases of important Soviet dissidents, in addition to having actual KGB identity cards, were issued KGB identity cards with false names. The KGB made extensive use of various cover documents that masked operatives' connections with state security organs, such as the criminal investigator identity cards handed out to KGB officers, but false KGB identity cards had never been used before in the Soviet Union. In this way, individuals who directly participated in operations escaped responsibility in the event of complaints, since when queried the KGB invariably averred that "such a person does not work here."

Left to right: Vladimir Popov, Albina (Alla) Demidova, Anatoly Aleksenkov and Valery Vorobyev

After serving for about two years in the Ninth Department, Tarasov was transferred to the post of head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. However, not everything had been clean in Tarasov's career. Among the agents with whom he was in contact were people who were involved in illegally obtaining gold from mines in the Magadan Region and transporting this gold to other parts of the Soviet Union. Internal affairs and state security organs operated in gold-mining areas and transportation hubs, airports and train and bus stations, arresting parties involved in illegally collecting and transporting gold. But the head of the Fifth Department of the KGB Directorate for the Magadan Region, Colonel Tarasov, was well informed about the operations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and KGB agents and skillfully found "windows" in their schedules for his own agents who were involved in illegal traffic in gold. Nonetheless, at a certain point the local prosecutor's office became interested in Tarasov's activities. Criminal charges were brought against some of Tarasov's agents and even his wife. Tarasov had to get out of Magadan. With help from his old acquaintance General Bobkov, Tarasov was transferred to Moscow.

The materials from the prosecutor's office about his past in Magadan followed him to Moscow. Consequently, although he was the head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB and his subordinates regularly traveled abroad as members of sports delegations,

Tarasov himself traveled abroad only once, on a short trip to the Chess Olympiad in socialist Bulgaria. The reason for this was that state security officers who traveled abroad went through a special background check to determine whether there were any compromising materials against them. The results of the background check were forwarded to the department of authorization for foreign travel at the Central Committee of the CPSU. Naturally, Bobkov could not inform this agency that an executive position in the Fifth Directorate of the KGB was occupied by an officer who had faced criminal charges for illegally trafficking in gold. But he could send Tarasov on a trip to a socialist country, for which no special background check was required.

In the subdivision that Tarasov headed, he was given the nickname “Grandpa” (“Ded”). Among the Soviet chess players with whom Tarasov interacted for a number of years, he was known as “Grayhair” (“Sedoy”). Colonel Tarasov’s deputy was the aforementioned Lieutenant Colonel Davnis. Before coming to work at the KGB, Davnis had been an agent of one of the district departments of the Moscow KGB directorate. After successfully graduating from a technical institute, he had married the daughter of an assistant to Alexey Kosygin, the head of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, with whose help he obtained a position in the KGB, even though he was already over 30 and thus close to the age limit. Davnis served in the Fifth Directorate practically from the moment that the directorate was formed. He worked on gathering intelligence around the Patrice Lumumba People’s Friendship University, as an officer in the Third Department of the Fifth Directorate, and was subsequently transferred to the Eight Department of the Fifth Directorate, which handled the cases of the so-called “Jewish extremists,” i.e., refuseniks who were trying to obtain permission to leave the USSR. When the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate was formed in 1977, Davnis was appointed deputy head of its Third Division and given the title of lieutenant colonel.

Over the years, Davnis became extremely suspicious of everyone, including his immediate co-workers, primarily because he feared troubles at work and criminal prosecution. He had broken at least two departmental rules: he had used operating resources for his personal needs (article 9) and he had entered into intimate relations with female agents.

While serving in the “athletic” Third Division of the Eleventh Department, Davnis began his workday by going to the restaurant of the Metropol Hotel, where members of foreign sports delegations ate. The head of the Protocol Department at the State Sports Committee, Mikhail Mzareulov, began his workday at this restaurant as well; it was here that he gave instructions to his subordinates from the Protocol Department and to non-staff translators working with foreign athletes.

> *Mzareulov, Mikhail, head of the Protocol Department at the State Sports Committee of the USSR from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s, recruited in 1973 by Anatoly Smaznov, an officer of the First Division of the First Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.*

In addition to his official position as head of the Protocol Department, Mzareulov was a KGB resident agent responsible for working with translators and overseeing the agents among the translators who were hired to work with foreign sports delegations. In the restaurant, Davnis always found agents’ reports waiting for him – they would be gathered for him by Mzareulov – and after a traditional breakfast he would proceed to his place of work in the Lubyanka building. The complimentary traditional breakfast would later be written off as an agency expense, as a meal offered in return for information being delivered or as a meal for a foreigner who interested the KGB. Therefore, the delegations whom the Sports Committee treated to breakfast numbered in the many dozens; Davnis did not go hungry.

As for the issue of women, Davnis – breaking with tradition – maintained long-term intimate relations with female agents, appeared with female agents in public, was involved in arranging their employment, and was even friendly with the families of some of his female agents (all of this was considered “agent exposure” and went against the rules of clandestinity). For one such woman, Davnis arranged a position in the First Department of the State Sports Committee.

Davnis had one more weakness, a passion for crime novels. Luckily for him, the KGB conducted large-scale mail inspections in the USSR. The KGB’s Technical Operations Directorate and local offices (in the republics, regions, and districts) included mail monitoring departments. On-site agents at post offices would prepare selections of incoming and outgoing international mail and forward them to these departments, where letters would be opened in a manner that could not be detected. Subsequently, the opened letters would be delivered to various operational subdivisions whose workers inspected them and decided whether they should be allowed to reach their addressees or be confiscated.

Mail was forwarded to different operational subdivisions in accordance with their specific fields of activity. For example, a subdivision that was involved in providing security for a facility that manufactured military technology would inspect mail addressed to the facility’s employees; a subdivision that oversaw sports inspected the mail of sports figures and athletes.

While he was still serving in the Eighth Department of the Fifth Directorate (handling “Jewish extremists”), Davnis once received for inspection a package from abroad that was addressed to a certain Igor Mozheyko, who lived on Mosfilmovskaya Street in Moscow. For Davnis, this package was a real treasure. It contained several foreign crime novels. Naturally, he immediately confiscated them and placed the unsuspecting Mozheyko on a “permanent mail watch.” For a number of years, he continued appropriating books sent to Mozheyko, penning

false reports claiming that they had been destroyed.

Mozheyko was a man of encyclopedic knowledge, a professor of history, and a science fiction writer whose work was read by millions of people. His pen-name, which was widely known to the reading public, was Kir Bulychev. Bulychev, who maintained informal relations with certain KGB agents, complained to them that someone in the KGB who loved crime novels was confiscating books that belonged to him, and that he would receive books only when the "lover of crime novels" was on vacation or traveling. This was indeed the case.

From the moment when the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate was formed at the end of 1977, both of the heads of its Third Division, Colonel Tarasov and his deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Davnis, were forced to become actively involved in chess. The presence of the Soviet grandmasters Boris Spassky and Viktor Kortschnoi abroad, in the opinion of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the Chess Directorate of the State Sports Committee, weakened the Soviet school of chess. A world chess championship was scheduled to take place in 1978. World Champion Anatoly Karpov could face serious obstacles in his attempt to retain the chess crown, one which he had acquired by default in 1975 when Bobby Fischer failed to defend his title.

Karpov's main opponent in his fight for the world championship would be Kortschnoi, who had four times been a champion of the USSR. In order to put psychological pressure on "the contender" – as Soviet propaganda referred to Kortschnoi in those years, without mentioning his first or last name – his son Igor was immediately drafted into the army. The term of service in the army was two to three years. But after serving his term, a member of the armed forces was automatically classified as having had access to state secrets and, by Soviet law, forbidden to leave the USSR for at least another five years. In this way, by drafting Igor Kortschnoi, the Soviet government was making it impossible for him to join his father for the next seven years, if not more. The level of a

person's exposure to state secrets, and its term of expiration, was determined by the KGB. It was perfectly obvious that for the son of Kortschnoi, "the enemy of the people," that term would not be brief.

Igor Kortschnoi understood this, too. Under these circumstances, he had only one option, to do everything he could to avoid getting drafted into the Soviet army. However, this was not easy to do. Numerous notices urgently summoning Igor Kortschnoi to the military enlistment office gave way to practically daily visits from a policeman who tried to hand such a notice to Igor Kortschnoi in person. Once one received such a notice in person and signed for it, one could be criminally prosecuted for avoiding military duty if one failed to appear at the military enlistment office. The only solution was to go into hiding.

It is not hard to guess that the KGB was behind the operation to conscript Kortschnoi's son. Specifically, it was organized by Vladimir "Little Vermin" Lavrov and supported by his immediate superiors, Tarasov and Davnis. It was not standard practice in the KGB to investigate and keep an "operational record file" on draft-dodgers. The KGB's agency charter simply contained no description of the actions taken by the KGB with respect to Igor Kortschnoi. Moreover, the criminal code of the Soviet Union clearly delimited the state security organs' field of activity to anything that could present a threat to the security of the country. It is perfectly obvious that Igor Kortschnoi's attempt to avoid the draft could in no way present a threat to the security of the USSR.

In working on ways of neutralize Viktor Kortschnoi abroad, the KGB determined that among the people who were close to him ("his close contacts," in KGB terminology) was one Petra Leeuwerik, a Swiss citizen who was already well known to Soviet state security. In the postwar years, Petra Leeuwerik had been a university student in Leipzig, which was within the Soviet-occupied zone. Soviet military intelligence opened a file on her on the suspicion that she was working as a spy for Western intelligence. The work on Petra Leeuwerik's case

culminated in her arrest and deportation to the Soviet Union, where she was convicted of espionage by the military collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR and sentenced to ten years in a labor camp. In 1945, when Soviet foreign intelligence began suspecting Petra of espionage, she was 20 years old.

Petra served her entire sentence in a labor camp in Vorkuta, where during the winter the temperature fell to -40°C. In the camp, state security organs continued working on her, hoping to get her to collaborate. But despite all of the hardships of life in the camp, and despite the fact that she was deprived of all contacts with her family and friends and had no opportunity to speak her own language, Petra Leeuwerik preserved her power of spirit, refused to collaborate with Soviet security services, and did not conceal from those who surrounded her, her hatred for the country in which she was serving a sentence for a crime that had never taken place. Chess became her one passion in the camp. Petra was able to return to her homeland only after Stalin's death, in 1955.

In the West, Petra Leeuwerik assisted Viktor Kortschnoi in various ways. Interviews with Kortschnoi and Leeuwerik, who soon became his common-law wife, began to appear regularly in the Western press. Subsequently, they would go on to make their marriage official. To the paranoid KGB, this looked like an operation organized by Western security services – an attempt to deal a blow to the USSR through the "utilization of the female agent network," first against Boris Spassky, and then against Viktor Kortschnoi.

By agreement with the Department of Propaganda and Agitation, the KGB began urging the State Sports Committee to take active steps to discredit Kortschnoi before the international and Soviet chess communities. To this end, the Chess Directorate of the State Sports Committee cooked up a letter strongly condemning Kortschnoi's failure to return to the Soviet Union and his critical statements to the Western press, characterizing them as "slanderous." This letter was then given to Soviet grandmasters for them to sign.

Such letters bearing the signatures of the representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia had been used before. In particular, the Fifth Directorate had prepared denunciatory screeds against writers Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Georgi Vladimov, Vasily Aksyonov, and Vladimir Voinovich, and against the cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. The jesuitical deviousness of such operations consisted in the fact that those who agreed to sign letters against their colleagues put themselves in the position of conformists and became hostages to their own actions, which they could never again live down. As compensation, they were allowed to go on with their creative work without artificial obstacles from the authorities.

But there were also people of a different kind among the Soviet intelligentsia. They were always in the minority, but this did not deter them from aspiring not to live a lie. Knowing in advance what kinds of privations they were bringing upon their themselves and their families, they refused to sign collective denunciations. Such people were called “unsigners.” The letter denouncing Kortschnoi was not signed by three outstanding Soviet grandmasters: Mikhail Botvinnik, David Bronstein, and Boris Gulko. By doing what they did, they added to their victories in chess a victory for the human spirit over the filth that surrounded them.

The KGB could not do much to punish Botvinnik, who had already ended his chess career. But Bronstein and Gulko acquired ample firsthand knowledge of the might of the repressive system. Denied the right to travel abroad, Bronstein was eliminated from the ranks of participants in international competitions for fifteen years. His chess career was practically destroyed. Gulko was permitted neither to travel abroad nor to take part in international tournaments within the Soviet Union. However, in 1977, despite the efforts of the leadership of the Chess Directorate, Gulko won the chess championship of the USSR. Then, in contempt of tournament rules, Gulko and the second contender for the

championship title, Dorfman, were forced to play a match between themselves. The match ended in a draw and the position of Soviet chess champion was formally declared open.

Chess was overseen by Viktor Ivonin, deputy head of the State Sports Committee and an agent of the KGB.

> *Ivonin, Viktor – deputy head of the State Sports Committee of the USSR, date of recruitment unknown. Ivonin's handler was the deputy head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, Major General Ivan Abramov.*

Ivonin was one of the key links in the chain of command that implemented KGB policy through the country's main sports organization. Knowing whom he was dealing with, he was mortally afraid of incurring the displeasure of his supervisors at state security. Ivonin was intent on carrying out the KGB's instructions to the letter: Gulko could not become champion under any circumstances. However, the head of the State Sports Committee, Pavlov, interfered in the matter, literally forcing Ivonin to redress the injustice and to give Gulko a chance finally to win the title of chess champion of the Soviet Union.

In 1978, there was a Chess Olympiad in Buenos Aires. The Soviet women's team was scheduled to take part in the games. One member of this team was Gulko's wife, Anna Akhsharumova, the winner of the women's chess championship of the USSR in 1976. Pavlov again managed to convince the Central Committee that it was necessary to send Gulko to these games – as Akhsharumova's coach. Thanks to Pavlov's perseverance, both spouses were allowed to travel to the games. This was something that happened extremely rarely in the Soviet Union, since close relatives of people traveling abroad were usually kept behind in the USSR as hostages.

On instructions received from the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, the Fifth Department of the KGB Directorate for the Leningrad Region opened an operational check file on Igor Kortschnoi to investigate whether he was involved in “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” (in the KGB’s terminology). Opening a file with such a profile because a citizen was avoiding military service was outside the KGB’s competence and constituted a blatant violation of Soviet law. Igor Kortschnoi did not participate in “antisocial actions” and he was not a human rights activist. He was guilty only of being the son of a great chess player.

Igor was put under strict surveillance by the KGB. His telephone conversations were monitored and transcribed in daily reports. He was constantly watched, and daily reports were made about his meetings with other people and his movements around the city. The KGB identified agents among his “contacts” (i.e., wide circle of acquaintances), with whom it then conducted special consultation sessions, instructing them to collect information about Kortschnoi’s family and about Igor’s plans. At the same time, new agents were being recruited, who also had the task of determining the Kortschnois’ plans and intentions.

If Igor, like his father, initially harbored the hope of quickly rejoining him abroad, then this hope now gradually evaporated. It was clear that the KGB would not allow Igor to leave the USSR. And it was clear that Igor would be able to avoid the army only by running away from his own home. For two long years, Igor Kortschnoi wandered about, staying with friends, since the addresses of all of his relatives, as Igor correctly assumed, were in the possession of the state security organs and the police. The Ministry of Internal Affairs placed Igor on wanted lists across the country. Any policeman who recognized him was to arrest him immediately.

During one of his forced wanderings, while living in secret in the apartment of a

friend in Moscow on Second Frunzenskaya Street, Igor made a fatal mistake and called home to Leningrad. The telephone call was immediately recorded by the technical operations department of the KGB Directorate for the Leningrad Region, and the information was sent to senior operative Major Bezverkhov in the Fifth Department, who was in charge of Igor Kortschnoi's file. The Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB was informed about the telephone call by encrypted telegram, and its officers soon determined the location of the apartment in which Igor was living. On the same day, the apartment was put under around-the-clock surveillance.

Several days later, Igor made a second mistake. He went to buy food at the nearest store and was immediately photographed by the KGB's surveillance workers. The photograph was sent to Leningrad, using the agency teleprinter, for final identification, after which Major Bezverkhov immediately flew to Moscow, accompanied by the head of the Third Department of the Seventh Directorate, Lieutenant Colonel Zapolskikh. Igor's hours of freedom were numbered.

On an early morning in June 1978, the doorbell rang in the apartment where Igor was hiding out. The snatch squad, with Zapolskikh at its head, entered the premises, presenting themselves as policemen conducting passport control. Kortschnoi, however, was not found. Zapolskikh then stepped out of the apartment, onto the stair landing, and radioed his subordinates, who were keeping watch as part of the surveillance team near the entrance of the building. He received confirmation that no one had left the apartment. Returning to the apartment, he began conducting a more thorough search and, climbing up into a ceiling cabinet in the hallway found the man whom the security services and the police had been seeking for over two years, Igor Kortschnoi. Now the KGB had the hostage it needed to exert pressure on Kortschnoi during his match with Karpov.

Several months remained until the match. Igor Kortschnoi's arrest and

conviction were only one part of a bigger plan. In 1976, on the recommendation of the KGB and the Central Committee, the State Sports Committee prohibited Soviet chess players from playing in international tournaments in which Kortschnoi took part. The newspaper *Sovetsky Sport*, which had millions of readers in the USSR, started regularly carrying articles in which Viktor Kortschnoi and Petra Leeuwerik were portrayed in the worst possible light. Most of these articles were written on the KGB's orders by the newspaper's foreign editor, Semyon Bliznyuk, recruited by the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate under the code name "Lvov."

> *Bliznyuk, Semyon – reporter, foreign editor of the newspaper Sovetsky Sport, recruited by Vladimir Popov, an officer of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, who oversaw this newspaper and the Soviet Federation of Sports Reporters. Due to his position, Bliznyuk was widely used. He investigated foreigners, Soviet reporters, and sports figures who interested the KGB. Bliznyuk was present at the Kortschnoi-Karpov matches. His KGB handler was primarily Vladimir Pishchenko of the Third Division of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB. Code name: Lvov.*

Bliznyuk ("Lvov") was also sent to the world chess championships in Baguio, Philippines in 1978 and Merano, Italy in 1981. After these trips, he published articles allegedly exposing all kinds of attempts at provocations against Anatoly Karpov by Kortschnoi and the members of his team.

Bliznyuk was abetted by another agent of the same subdivision of the KGB, Alexander Roshal, who published articles against Kortschnoi both in his own magazine and in other leading Soviet periodicals. To lend support to Karpov's team, on the KGB's insistence Roshal was appointed press attaché to the Soviet grandmaster, which enabled Roshal to remain abroad for the entire duration of the match and to receive additional travel pay and bonuses for exclusive reports

during the match.

The battles on the chessboard were not the only ones that took place during the chess match in Baguio in 1978. Pishchenko, the Spanishspeaking officer from the Third Division of the Fifth Directorate who was attached to Karpov, following orders from the leadership of the KGB, established close, informal relations with the vice president of the World Chess Federation (FIDE), Florencio Campomanos. Through Pishchenko, Karpov then established a relationship of trust with Campomanos as well. At the same time, the KGB began to "cultivate" Campomanos as a "candidate for recruitment." His Achilles' Heel was soon discovered: the vice president of FIDE dreamed of becoming the president of FIDE. In return for a promise that his candidacy would be supported by the USSR and the entire socialist bloc in the FIDE elections, Campomanos agreed to become an agent of the KGB and to promote the Soviet Union's chess policy and Karpov's interests. The approach used on Campomanos was effectively the same as the one that had already been employed on the president of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch of Spain, who had been recruited by the Third Department of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB. In return for becoming an agent, Samaranch had been promised the presidency of the International Olympic Committee – through the votes of the USSR and the other socialist countries.

Samaranch, Juan Antonio – president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Samaranch was elected president of the IOC in 1980 in Moscow. Prior to his election, he had been Spanish ambassador to the Soviet Union. Samaranch was recruited by an officer of the Third Department of the Second Main Directorate of the KGB (this department oversaw the Spanish embassy in Moscow). The KGB was able to recruit Samaranch because it caught him engaged in illegally transporting Russian antiques out of the USSR, which constituted a criminal violation under

Soviet law. After becoming an agent, Samaranch was elected to the presidency of the IOC thanks to the votes of the USSR and the socialist bloc.

But let us return to Baguio. Operatives from the KGB's Technical Operations Directorate who were part of the Soviet delegation monitored Karpov's health daily, checking his vital functions, and constantly testing the food consumed by him; they also bugged the quarters occupied by the Soviet delegation. A specially designated officer from the Eighth Main Directorate (encryption and decryption) kept in touch with the home office through encrypted messages. These messages did not simply describe what was going on around the match: most of their content consisted of information about chess positions and requests for advice from leading Soviet grandmasters about moves that Karpov could make in games that had been adjourned.

In effect, two teams in Moscow were working for Karpov. One of them operated in the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, which received all of the latest information about the course of the match. The other was located in the State Sports Committee of the USSR. Through the efforts of the KGB and the State Sports Committee, a large number of leading Soviet grandmasters had been recruited to serve as Karpov's consultants. Their recommendations were promptly sent in encrypted telegrams to the KGB operational group that formed part of the Karpov's team in Baguio.

Karpov's team also included the psychologist Zukhar, who worked at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center. In addition to providing Karpov with psychological assistance during the match, Zukhar was supposed to exert a negative influence on Kortschnoi during the match using parapsychological techniques. In the USSR, Zukhar was a recognized specialist in this field. During the match, he always sat in the front rows and did not leave his seat until the game ended for the day.

By combined efforts, victory was snatched away from the “enemy of the Soviet nation,” Kortschnoi. Anatoly Karpov, the protégé of the CPSU and the KGB, remained world champion. But this win had to become just a prologue to future triumphs in the chess arena for the favorite of the general secretary of the Communist Party, Leonid Brezhnev. In order to ensure future victories for Karpov, the successes of his potential opponents were carefully tracked. His main adversary was easily identified: a brilliant chess player named Garry Kasparov was growing and maturing in Baku (Azerbaijan). Kasparov’s first coach had been Alexander Nikitin.

> *Nikitin, Alexander – Kasparov’s first coach, recruited in 1980 by the deputy head of the Fifth Department of the Azerbaijan KGB, Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Litvinov.*

Even people who were not specialists in chess could see Kasparov’s exceptional talent. Gifted, outgoing, and unpredictable, he gave rise to serious apprehensions among the Soviet leadership, all the more so because – as was known in official circles – he was half-Jewish, half-Armenian by birth. Such a person could not have appeared reliable. Karpov was Russian.

The first thing Moscow did was to order Baku to attach a KGB officer to Kasparov to monitor him during all of his trips abroad. This position was filled by the deputy head of the Fifth Department of the Azerbaijan KGB, Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Litvinov, a former bodyguard for the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, Heydar Aliyev.

A master of sports in the pentathlon, tall and broad-shouldered with a thick mane of curly hair, the handsome Litvinov was a notable figure in Baku. It was not an accident that he had been chosen for the job of chaperoning Kasparov. The head of the republic, Aliyev, carefully followed the successes of the Baku-born

Kasparov and made all kinds of efforts to create conditions that were favorable to him. Aliyev knew Litvinov well, he knew his even temper, and he knew his ability to establish good relations with people.

Litvinov fully lived up to Aliyev's expectations. For many years, he became practically part of Kasparov's family, sincerely caring for him and for his mother, who was very important in the life of the chess player.

Litvinov found himself in a difficult situation. He was part of Kasparov's team, but he regularly made trips to Moscow, particularly before Kasparov's trips abroad, in order to receive detailed instructions from his superiors at the central office. After returning from tournaments, Litvinov was forced to remain in Moscow for several days in order to write detailed reports about the trips for the KGB. These reports included descriptions of Kasparov's behavior, his contacts, the relations among the members of his team, and even his mother's influence on him, since she made many organizational decisions in her son's team. But the main problem lay elsewhere. Litvinov became increasingly aware of an openly negative attitude toward Kasparov on the part of his Moscow colleagues at the KGB.

Captain Kuleshov, who was in charge of chess at the KGB, had known Litvinov since the time when both of them had taken part in the USSR pentathlon championship together: both were masters of sports. They had not been friends; their personalities were too different. When they met again as KGB officers, there was even less chance of them becoming friends. Litvinov, though Kuleshov's peer, already occupied a prominent position in the Azerbaijan KGB. In addition, he had the privilege of accompanying Kasparov on trips abroad. The homely Kuleshov had none of these things. Consequently, Kuleshov, who was used to hating people who were successful in life, made another enemy, Litvinov. And he formed another ambition: to replace Litvinov as the KGB officer attached to Kasparov.

This idea was well received in Moscow. On instructions from his Moscow colleagues, specifically, the deputy head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Major Igor Perfiliev, Litvinov introduced Kuleshov to Kasparov and his mother. But the more Kuleshov tried to get close to the Kasparovs, the more obvious Litvinov's superiority became to them. The plan to replace Litvinov had to be abandoned.

In 1981, another world championship was scheduled to take place between Anatoly Karpov and Viktor Kortschnoi. The KGB carefully studied Kortschnoi's connections among Soviet grandmasters who might help him prepare for the match. One chess player who could potentially become an assistant and an ally to Kortschnoi, in the

KGB's opinion, was Boris Gulko, the young Moscow grandmaster who had refused to sign the collective letter against Kortschnoi and who, together with his wife, had applied for permission to emigrate to Israel.

The Gulkos' emigration application had dropped like an exploding bomb on the KGB. The Soviet chess bosses were convinced that if Gulko emigrated, he would become Kortschnoi's coach both during his preparation for his match with Karpov and during the match itself. Kortschnoi himself repeatedly said as much in his interviews. What made the situation even more serious (for the KGB) was the fact that Boris Gulko's wife, Anna Akhsharumova, was a top women's chess player. In 1976, she had won the USSR Women's Championship, in which the then-world champion, Nona Gaprindashvili, and the future world champion Maia Chiburdanidze, also took part. Akhsharumova's outstanding accomplishments constituted weighty reasons for supposing that her permanent resettlement from the USSR into any other country would create a genuine threat to the dominance of Soviet women's chess players in the world, since she had every chance of becoming the next world champion. This was the belief of ex-

world champion Mikhail Botvinnik, who thought that with Akhsharumova's departure the USSR could lose the women's chess crown.

The person most concerned about this situation was Anatoly Karpov. Formally, Karpov's – or "Raul's" – handler at the KGB was Pishchenko. But most of the work with Karpov and with his assistants – the closest of whom were the two "Aliks," as Alexander Bach and Alexander Roshal were known in chess circles – was conducted by Pishchenko's immediate superior, Tarasov.

> *Bach, Alexander – recruited in 1979 by the head of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Colonel Boris Tarasov.*

On orders from Tarasov, Bach, who was friendly with Gulko, persistently advised Gulko to abandon his emigration plans, promising him various benefits in return, above all the possibility of participating in prestigious foreign tournaments. However, Gulko did not change his mind.

The technical work on Gulko's case was assigned to Kuleshov. But since Kuleshov had no experience with such work, it was actually done by Tarasov. After the personnel changes in the Eleventh Department, the new deputy head of the department, Major Perfiliev, began to be involved in Gulko's case as well. It was Perfiliev (in Kuleshov's presence) who recruited the new head of the Chess Directorate, Krogius, who had replaced Baturinsky at this post. Krogius chose for himself the code name "Endgame" ("Endshpil"), which he used while collaborating with the KGB-FSK-FSB until he emigrated to the United States. Perfiliev and Kuleshov also recruited Krogius's loyal assistant Gufeld, a grandmaster who, like Krogius, also ended up emigrating to the United States.

Traditionally, when two KGB officers recruited a new agent, both received credit for it, regardless of their respective ranks. For Perfiliev, who at that time occupied the position of deputy head of a department and had the rank of major,

new recruitments were not important. The newcomer Kuleshov, by contrast, improved his standing by adding new recruits to his file. Over time, this illiterate KGB worker who could not write the simplest document (Tarasov or Kuleshov's colleagues wrote them for him) rose to the position of operative and the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Dissatisfied with the results of the work being done on Gulko, who refused to give up the idea of emigrating from the USSR, Major General Abramov, the head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, got involved in the case. He decided to deal with the intransigent grandmaster personally.

During the years of Andropov's tenure as head of the KGB, state security organs made wide use of so-called "prophylactic measures." "Prophylactic measures" consisted in the following approach. While working with its agent networks, the KGB would accumulate information about activities by individuals or groups of individuals that could that could have damaging effects on the Soviet system. At the early stages of such activities, certain parties who were of particular interest to the KGB would be called in for an official conversation with a view to elucidating for them the illegality of their actions. The view was that such explanatory conversations could reduce the number of potential dissidents in the country. In the event that such preventive measures yielded no results, the KGB issued an official warning, which was followed, as a rule, by arrest and a trial.

Gulko's intention to emigrate did not fall within the category of actions that required a "prophylactic conversation." But General Abramov's subordinates were responsible for carrying out the orders of the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Leonid Brezhnev, as well as the head of the KGB and member of the Politburo, Yuri Andropov. In view of these circumstances, and with the aim of exerting a more decisive influence on Gulko, Abramov decided to conduct a prophylactic conversation personally. And in order to make things even more frightening for Gulko, Abramov invited him to his office in the

Lubyanka building.

An invitation for a conversation at KGB headquarters was in itself seen as an important prophylactic measure. Such conversations could be conducted by KGB officers at different locations: in places of study, work, in Communist Party and public organizations. It was believed that the very fact of being invited for a conversation at the KGB exerted a powerful psychological influence on a person. Soviet citizens remembered well the times when people simply did not come back from such conversations, but were sent directly to prisons and labor camps for many years. Some people, after such conversations, had simply been shot. Of course, all this had taken place under Stalin. But the KGB's psychological calculations were based precisely on the fact that almost every Soviet family had relatives who had been imprisoned or executed during the Stalin years. And no one was ever certain that after such a conversation he or she would be released.

The more famous the person invited for a conversation was, the more high-ranking would be the KGB officer who would meet with him. The famous pop singer Alla Pugacheva and her husband, the film director Stefanovich, had their prophylactic conversation with Lieutenant General Bobkov himself. Gulko had his with Abramov. On the appointed day and hour, in entrance no. 5 of building no. 1/3 on Furkasovsky Lane, that faced Dzerzhinsky Square, grandmaster Gulko was met by General Abramov's faithful assistant, Major Lavrov. After climbing four high steps and presenting their identity papers to the officers stationed at the entrance, Gulko and Lavrov took a slow elevator up to the ninth and last floor. On this floor, directly across from the elevator, was Bobkov's office, and at the very end of a long hallway, which stretched to the right of the elevator, was the office of Abramov. There were other offices there as well, belonging to operatives from the First and Ninth Departments of the Fifth Directorate.

Abramov's corner office was spacious. The general sat behind a massive mahogany desk, with his back to the enormous, ceiling-high windows, which opened onto a magnificent view of the Kremlin. This sight was undoubtedly supposed to make first-time visitors to Abramov's office quake in their boots. It was clear that the man who occupied such an office decided people's fates.

General Abramov had climbed up the career ladder from its lowest rung. During the war years, he dug trenches on the approaches to Moscow. He saw no action, but once he became a general, he was able to obtain documents attesting to his participation in the Great Patriotic War. After digging trenches, he joined the headquarters company of the NKVD Directorate for Moscow and the Moscow Region. While serving in the headquarters company, Abramov became a Komsomol activist and was elected secretary of the directorate's Komsomol committee, which had positive consequences for his career. From his very first days on the job, he learned two important principles: serve the Communist Party unquestioningly and never go against your superiors.

During the 1960s and 1970s, his name was already well known among the Moscow intelligentsia. Those who dared to be critical of the Soviet government and the rule of the Communist Party were mercilessly punished by Abramov. Those who took part in human rights demonstrations on Pushkinskaya Square in Moscow will not likely forget the name of the man who organized crackdowns on peaceful demonstrations and arrested their participants. This was Abramov, who had by then become a colonel. He zeal was taken note of. From the KGB Directorate for Moscow and the Moscow Region, which was a regional organ, Abramov was transferred to the KGB's central office and appointed head of the First Department of the recently formed Fifth Directorate, whose mission was to combat "ideological sabotage by the enemy."

In 1965-1966, the world was shaken by the trials of two Soviet writers, Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sinyavsky, whose crime consisted in publishing their works

outside the USSR. In 1968, Abramov and his subordinates arrested and then brought to trial six brave young people who had not been afraid to come out onto Red Square in protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops. In 1972, nonconformist artists – not officially recognized by the government – held an open-air, unsanctioned exhibit of their work in Moscow. The event came to be known as the “Bulldozer Exhibition” since bulldozers were used to chase its participants away, turning the exhibited artists’ canvases into shreds and woodchips in the process. The bulldozers were followed by water cannons, which mercilessly shot water on the exhibit’s participants and attendees. This was a genuine scare tactic, vividly demonstrating that those who were doing the bidding of the government of the country would stop at nothing to protect it. The organizer of this operation was Colonel Abramov.

The famous dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, who was later exchanged for the General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, Luis Corvalán, was likewise arrested by Abramov. The persecution campaigns against the writers Vladimir Voinovich and Georgi Vladimov, Vasily Aksyonov and Anatoly Gladilin – which led to their emigration from the Soviet Union – were organized by Abramov, too. In time, Abramov became a general, then the deputy head, and finally the head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB. It was with this person that grandmaster Boris Gulko now had to meet for a conversation.

With his extensive experience in breaking people and people’s lives, the last thing that General Abramov expected was defeat in his conversation with Gulko. The willful chess player would not budge; he wanted to leave the Soviet Union. And Abramov was unable to change his mind. For the first and, probably, the last time, General Abramov became ashamed of his rank and, releasing Gulko, told him that, if necessary, Gulko could get in touch him by calling the Lubyanka building’s official telephone and asking for “Colonel Abramov.” It was inconvenient for General Abramov to reveal at what level the fate of

grandmaster Gulko was being decided and who it was that had lost the game.

Since the conversation had yielded negative results, Abramov ordered a multipronged offensive against Gulko. Abramov knew that when individuals opposed to the system encountered extreme pressure from it, they often broke down and begged for mercy. Gulko began to be pressured on all sides. Top officials in the Soviet chess hierarchy took turns talking to him and his wife, Akhsharumova, using either threats or promises to try to get them to change their minds about leaving the USSR. On the KGB's orders, the Gulkos were deprived of their "stipends" (guaranteed monthly payments given to leading Soviet sports figures) and their last names disappeared from the lists of participants in tournaments inside the Soviet Union. Along with their recently born child, the Gulkos were left practically without a means of support.

However, the Soviet government had bad luck. In 1979, one more Soviet chess player, Lev Alburt, asked for political asylum in the United States while playing with the Soviet team at an international tournament in West Germany. Allowing the Gulkos to leave now would mean giving all Soviet grandmasters the green light to emigrate. And this was something that the authorities feared as much as Karpov's defeat in his match with Kortschnoi. Gulko and his wife were now also being punished for Alburt.

The Moscow Olympics of 1980 were approaching. The leadership of the Soviet Union was quite concerned about the situation unfolding around the upcoming games both abroad and within the USSR. The Soviet army had just entered Afghanistan. President Carter had declared a boycott of the Olympic games. Soviet foreign policy was being criticized around the world. The Soviet government's domestic policies – its draconian persecution of dissenting individuals and its refusal to allow Jews to emigrate from the USSR – were also being condemned by the world community and the leaders of the democratic countries.

Critics of the Soviet system directed particular attention to the Soviet government's use of psychiatry for punitive purposes. The originators of this idea were the head of the KGB, Andropov, and the head of the Fifth Directorate, Bobkov. The purpose of this approach to dealing with dissent was to reduce the number of political prisoners in the Soviet Union. Implementing Andropov's orders, Bobkov instructed his subordinates either to put dissidents in special psychiatric hospitals, or to bring criminal charges against individuals who had been arrested for political offenses and to hold them criminally liable.

Security for these special psychiatric hospitals was provided by military personnel from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, ensuring brutal living conditions for their inmates. The patients' contacts with the outside world were strictly limited. On doctors' orders, patients were forced to undergo a course of treatment. The people who ended up in such institutions quickly realized that psychiatric hospitals in the USSR were scarier than prisons. A convict serving a prison sentence would have been sentenced by a court to a specified number of years. The human rights defenders who were put in psychiatric hospitals were not interred there on the basis of a court ruling, the period of their stay was unspecified and indefinite, and such "patients" never had any rights at all.

As for those individuals who had criminal charges brought against them for political offenses, even at the preliminary hearings stage they were usually held in pretrial detention facilities with felons who, with the consent of prison administration officials, abused the human rights advocates among their fellow inmates.

But what was to be done, with the Olympics just around the corner, about the stubborn Gulko family? How could the Gulkos be prevented from talking to foreigners or from staging protests during the Moscow Olympics? After all, one could not very well put chess players in a madhouse for wanting to emigrate

from the Soviet Union. Colonel Tarasov had several bright ideas. First, Karpov ("Raul") let it be known to Gulko, through the grandmasters Sosonko and Razuvaev, that the emigration issue might be decided in Gulko's favor. This was deliberate disinformation. Its purpose was to stop Gulko from taking part in refuseniks' protests for some period of time before the Olympics. Since there was no complete certainty that Gulko would not take part in any undesirable activities, Tarasov decided to send Gulko away from Moscow into honorable temporary exile. From his agents among the grandmasters, Tarasov knew that Gulko was friendly with the gifted coach and master Mark Dvoretsky, whose charges included one of the strongest Georgian woman chess players, Nana Alexandria. Right at this time, Alexandria and Dvoretsky were scheduled to travel to the State Sports Committee's sports facility in Eshery, Abkhazia, where Alexandria was supposed to prepare for a tournament. Eshery was an Olympic facility and it was hard to imagine a better place for Gulko's "exile."

In 1977, on orders from the KGB, all sports facilities that were classified as Olympic facilities began to be monitored by state security organs. Their staffs were recruited into the KGB *en masse*. The KGB began using these locations for working with agents who were members of Soviet teams in various kinds of sports. The two Aliks, Bach and Roshal, both of them Colonel Tarasov's agents, persuaded the unsuspecting Dvoretsky that the best thing for his friend Gulko would be to take a rest from all his problems in Eshery, where he could also help out with Alexandria's training. Dvoretsky invited Gulko to Eshery and Gulko accepted the invitation.

In order to keep track of the Gulkos, the operational capabilities of the Abkhazian KGB were used. The room in which the Gulkos lived was bugged before their arrival. In addition, two KGB agents had been dispatched to Eshery: one was an employee of the Biomedical Support Directorate at the State Sports Committee – and an agent of the Third Division of the Eleventh Department of

the Fifth Directorate – who accompanied Soviet chess teams on trips abroad as a doctor and knew Gulko personally; the other was Baturinsky. In Eshery, the KGB made an attempt to recruit yet another agent, Dvoretsky himself. He refused, and as a result was prohibited from traveling abroad – “for operational considerations” – for one year.

The operation was a success. During the Olympic games in Moscow, there were no protest actions from the Gulko family. The Olympics ended without incident. Because a number of countries boycotted the event because of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and because many leading athletes did not take part in the games, these competitions became a triumph for Soviet teams, which won 80 gold medals. Few people in the USSR or outside it knew how these medals were won. In the Moscow OIympics’ center for monitoring performance-enhancing drug use, Soviet athletes’ positive tests were replaced by negative ones. To ensure that judges would vote for Soviet teams, the Central Committee of the CPSU issued secret orders to disburse a significant quantity of U.S. dollars to the State

Sports Committee of the USSR for bribing foreign judges. The KGB made active use of its hard-currency resources to purchase expensive gifts, which were passed to foreign judges through the KGB’s agent network.

At the end of the Moscow Olympics, many KGB officers were awarded various government and agency honors. Tarasov was given a medal “For Valiant Labor.” Kuleshov was promoted and soon became a major. The KGB began to prepare for the next battle on the chess front: the world championship match between Karpov and Kortschnoi in the spring of 1981.

In the months leading up to the match, Karpov twice met with Andropov in his office in the Lubyanka building. By the spring, the KGB had developed a plan of action that involved a whole panoply of its of branches: the First Main

Directorate, the Technical Operations Directorate; the Fifth Directorate; and the Eighth Main Directorate (encryption and decryption). Among other things, the plan stipulated that the Fifth Directorate would continue neutralizing the actions of Kortschnoi's presumed assistant, Gulko. And at this point Gulko had another stroke of good luck (after his "vacation" at the sports facility in Abkhazia). He received a new apartment from the State Sports Committee.

To keep Gulko under surveillance and to be able to take preventive actions against him, it was necessary to monitor his conversations. His apartment had to be bugged. To install listening devices in the apartment where Gulko was living with his parents was difficult, since some member of Gulko's large family was always at home – usually his father, a disabled war veteran.

To solve this problem, Perfiliev persuaded the State Sports Committee to earmark a new apartment for Gulko and his wife in the newly built Strogino microdistrict. Such an apartment could be bugged before the Gulkos moved in. This would allow the KGB to keep abreast of their plans.

In KGB terminology, installing bugging devices at a location was referred to as "Provision T" (in chekist slang, "Tatyana"). Ordinarily, intercepted conversations would be relayed to a special transmitting unit, covertly installed in the attic or basement utility rooms in a residential building, from where the information would be transmitted in encrypted form to a monitoring station operated by the Twelfth Department of the KGB. Here, it would be decrypted and recorded on special magnetic tape. Then, operatives from the Twelfth Department would process the information, transcribing it and putting it into readable form. Telephones had not yet been installed in the building where the Gulkos' new apartment was located, nor in the microdistrict of which it was a part. This created certain difficulties for the technical personnel from the Twelfth Department that was responsible for installing bugging devices and relaying intercepted information.

The Twelfth Department installed a transmitting unit in the attic of the Gulkos' new building. The transmitting unit was securely sealed inside a brick wall. A wire link, likewise securely concealed, was extended from the transmitting unit to the building's roof. The line was then extended through the air to the roof of the neighboring residential building. From here, it was connected to a receiver sealed inside a brick wall in this building's attic. Finally, the line was extended through utility rooms in the building to an apartment outfitted as a safe house by the Twelfth Department. This apartment was a "station" for the KGB operators responsible for recording the intercepted information, processing it, and maintaining a 24-hour external connection with operatives at the Twelfth Department and the Government Communications Directorate.

At that time, mobile phones did not yet exist. Therefore, fixed radio stations were used for audio and video communication. Such a radio station was installed in the safe house. The door of the apartment was secured, and the KGB operators working in the apartment carried personal weapons in the event of unforeseen situations.

The operators from the Twelfth Department who processed the intercepted information were all young women, ensigns by rank. Most of them had graduated from the stenography program at the Soviet foreign ministry and then selected for service in the KGB. During perestroika, one such woman, Ursulova, was appointed deputy head of the Twelfth Department by General Kryuchkov, the head of the KGB. This was a general's post. In this way, for the first time in its history, the Soviet state security system acquired a female major general who had been made into a general for serving in a unit responsible for listening in on conversations of "targets of operational interest."

Planting bugging devices in grandmaster Gulko's apartment and using this technology to obtain vital information about the Gulkos' plans and intentions

was quite a costly undertaking. Considerable monetary resources were spent on the installation of the equipment and the processing of the obtained information. Operators from the Twelfth Department kept watch around the clock in the safe house apartment. They worked in week-long shifts; during each shift they were not permitted to leave the apartment or to communicate with the outside world in any way that was not related to their work. Food was delivered to them by other Twelfth Department employees.

The funds expended on Gulko's case also included resources spent on surveillance, the daily cost of which was equivalent to the cost of a car. But the end justified the means. And the end was to secure victory for Karpov in the world chess championship.

Igor Kortschnoi remained in prison, causing protests around the world, since the positions of the participants of the upcoming match – Karpov and Kortschnoi – were clearly unequal. Therefore, Fridrik Olafsson, the president of FIDE, took an unprecedented step and postponed the start of the match from September 19 to October 19, 1981, formally motivating his decision by saying that he wished to give the Soviet side more time to address the issue of releasing Igor Kortschnoi and offering him and his mother the opportunity to emigrate. At a Chess Federation meeting prior to the match, Gulko and Akhsharumova read an open letter in support of Kortschnoi. However, despite pressure from FIDE and Gulko and Akhsharumova's initiative, Igor Kortschnoi was not released and he and his mother were not allowed to join Viktor Kortschnoi. The pressure on Gulko only increased; in fact, now Karpov joined in with the KGB personally. With Colonel Tarasov's agreement, Alexander Bach met with Gulko and conveyed to him Karpov's extreme displeasure with Gulko's actions in Kortschnoi's defense.

Karpov played a very subtle game not only on the chessboard, but also in chess politics. He managed to convince Tarasov that after his next victory over

Kortschnoi (of which Karpov, relying on the support of the KGB, the Soviet government, and Campomanos, was certain), it would be possible to release Gulko from the USSR, since he would no longer present a danger in the capacity of Kortschnoi's coach. The threat that Akhsharumova posed to the USSR's stature in chess did not worry Karpov. After all, he was the champion among men. On the other hand, if Gulko continued to remain in the USSR, then he could begin to coach Kasparov, whose star was on the rise. And that was mortally dangerous for Karpov. For this reason, Karpov tried to convince Tarasov that it was imperative to kick Gulko out of the country as soon as possible after his match with Kortschnoi in 1981 in Merano, Italy.

By making their letter public, Gulko and Akhsharumova ruined Karpov's plans. Karpov was forced to listen to serious reprimands from Tarasov, who declared that, after his actions in defense of Kortschnoi, Gulko would never be released from the USSR. However, it was decided that reprisals against Gulko would be postponed until the end of the match in Merano.

On Andropov's orders and in keeping with the KGB's general plan of action, the decision was made to send a unique and secret piece of equipment, bearing the code name "Tent," to Merano by diplomatic mail for the duration of the match between Kortschnoi and Karpov. This device, which weighed many tons, screened off interior spaces and virtually completely eliminated the possibility of the "adversary" bugging an indoor location. The device had been developed by KGB experts and was used exclusively by top officials traveling abroad on state visits, during which their delegations occupied lodgings offered by the host country.

Several days prior to the beginning of the match, three enormous containers, accompanied by KGB operatives with diplomatic passports, arrived in the Milan airport. They were met there by Soviet foreign intelligence officers operating undercover at the Soviet embassy in Italy. The freight was marked "diplomatic"

and not subject to customs inspections. However, Italian customs officials were disconcerted by the weight and size of the freight and insisted on an inspection. But when the Soviet foreign ministry and the Soviet ambassador in Italy got involved in the matter, the freight was allowed to pass without an inspection.

The “Tent” was then assembled in the private house that had been given to Anatoly Karpov for the duration of the match. This house was kept under 24-hour guard by KGB officers from the operational group that had been sent to Italy to accompany Karpov. No “outside” person had the right to visit the private house, not even Karpov’s wife, Irina, who had come to the match as a tourist, even though she was the daughter of the deputy head of the RT Directorate (operations on Soviet territory) of the First Main Directorate of the KGB, Kuimov.

In addition to securing the premises occupied by Karpov and his team against bugging, the technical experts from the KGB’s operational group covertly penetrated the lodgings occupied by various members of Viktor Kortschnoi’s team and installed bugging equipment there. One young European grandmaster had a Spanishspeaking wife. She had been recruited by Pishchenko and was known in the KGB under the code name “Amigo.” Her husband was on good terms with Kortschnoi, had constant contacts with him and members of his team, and was present at his matches both in 1978 and in 1981. Through Amigo, the KGB indirectly received information about what was going on in Kortschnoi’s camp. As a result, every day Karpov’s camp had a relatively complete picture of Kortschnoi’s preparations for the next game.

The operational group from the KGB also included poisonous substances experts, whose task it was to monitor Karpov’s food intake and bowel movements. Their mission was to prevent anyone from putting anything into Karpov’s food that could negatively influence the health of the Soviet world champion. In addition, these experts had in their possession special substances

that provoked anxiety, caused sleep disturbances, and raised blood pressure. Agents from the operational group were able covertly to enter the premises occupied by Kortschnoi and his team and to work their lodgings over with these substances.

According to the plan worked out by the KGB, if the match were to take a turn that was unfavorable for Karpov, Kortschnoi would be given a toxic substance that caused congestive heart failure leading to death. But this was naturally considered only a last resort – if Karpov started losing.

During the match, the KGB's experts in the field of parapsychology, who were also part of the operational group sent to Italy, were especially active. Several dozen institutes in the Soviet Union conducted scientific research on the possibility of influencing the human mind at a distance. Their best techniques and researchers were used by the KGB. The KGB used its entire arsenal on Kortschnoi's group. The KGB operational group and the rest of Karpov's team clearly recognized that at home they would not be forgiven if Karpov lost. Such a contest could hardly be called equal.

Thefight for Karpov's victory in Merano went on in the USSR as well. On orders from the KGB, the Chess Directorate of the State Sports Committee, headed by agent Krogius (or "Endgame") required all of the leading Soviet grandmasters to analyze every game between Karpov and Kortschnoi and to offer their recommendations as the games unfolded. The KGB maintained stable, daily contacts with Merano, sending encrypted messages back and forth. However, despite all of these efforts, during the second half of the match Karpov began to break down. He did not have enough physical strength. The paranoid operational group from the KGB began to suspect that Karpov was being somehow negatively influenced. Thus, technical experts from the operational group covertly entered the hall where the match was taking place, which was closely guarded by the Italian police, and inspected Karpov's chair. They discovered a

hole on the underside of the seat, ten-by-five centimeters in size. No other suspicious factors that could detrimentally influence Karpov's physical condition were found.

The discovery of the hole in the seat was received rather seriously at the KGB. In the opinion of heads of the operational group, this proved that there had been attempts to influence Karpov on the part of the opposing team and gave the green light to the operational group from the KGB. If Kortschnoi had been close to winning, he could have suddenly died of congestive heart failure.

But Kortschnoi lived, because he lost. Karpov once again retained the world title. The Soviet Union had a second victory when it succeeded in displacing Olafsson, the head of FIDE who was hated by the Soviet authorities, and electing the Filipino Florencio Campomanos, a KGB agent recruited by Pishchenko, to his post. This was the beginning of the Karpov era, which would last for several years. All of the grandmaster's wishes were unquestioningly carried out by FIDE.

It was not the end of the KGB's chess battles, however. In September 1982, an interzonal tournament for the world championship was to take place in Moscow. Thanks to the fact that Gulko's apartment had been bugged, the KGB knew that during the tournament Gulko and his wife were planning hold a protest demonstration against the Soviet government's policy of not letting them go to Israel.

The deputy head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB at this time was Lieutenant Colonel Perfiliev. On the eve of the tournament, he ran into some trouble. In June 1982, while participating in an international competition in Spain, Vassa Gerasimova, a member of the Soviet Union's synchronized swimming team, asked for political asylum. Gerasimova had been investigated for a long time by Perfiliev's department, since it was known that

Gerasimova was in contact with the second secretary of the Canadian embassy in Moscow, Gaevsky. Gaevsky, who, in turn, was being investigated by the Second Department of the Second Main Directorate – naturally, on suspicions of engaging in espionage.

Gaevsky and Gerasimova had an affair, and the KGB was examining the option of prohibiting Gerasimova from traveling to Spain. But Perfiliev, who had the last word, considered the information insufficient for a prohibition and permitted her to go. In two weeks, Gerasimova traveled to Spain, where she at once asked the authorities for political asylum.

During this time, the KGB was headed by General Fedorchuk, a man who was distinguished by his dour disposition. This was the first case of defection during his tenure as head of the KGB, and Fedorchuk issued orders to find and punish the guilty parties. The KGB's Inspections Directorate took over the case and established Perfiliev's guilt. Perfiliev was severely reprimanded. Realizing that his career was in danger, Perfiliev launched himself into the chess wars with renewed energy. It was necessary, as he saw it, to prove his competence as department head and his uncompromising attitude toward those who opposed the Soviet regime.

The interzonal chess tournament was to take place at the Central Tourist House, which had been built prior to the Moscow Olympics. It faced Leninsky Prospect and had no barrier of any kind around its perimeter. This fact truly frightened Perfiliev and he managed to get the tournament transferred to the Sport Hotel, located nearby and surrounded by a high fence.

Frightened by his recent punishment, Perfiliev introduced unprecedented security measures. Chess events had always been open to all interested spectators. Now, for the first time, a tournament was closed to all except those lucky individuals who had a special pass. Passes were distributed by party

organizations at people's places of employment and at the Moscow Central Chess Club. The tournament was inaccessible to chess lovers from other cities. In addition, the hotel was guarded around its perimeter and inside by several dozen OMON riot police officers. Inside the tournament, state security officers from the KGB Directorate for Moscow and the Moscow Region and from the Fifth Directorate kept constant watch.

The main purpose of the measures taken to limit access to the tournament was to prevent the possibility of a protest demonstration by Gulko. During the first day of the tournament, Perfiliev sent Lieutenant Colonel Davnis, the deputy head of the Third Division, to the location where the games were being played: Davnis was supposed to supervise the joint actions of the KGB, the internal troops from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the police, all of which were responsible for keeping the peace around the hotel and inside it. A tall, thickset man, with a large, practically bald head, Davnis was going around the outside of the hotel, making sure that its security was properly organized, when he came upon a vivid sight. On the other side of Leninsky Prospect, two unrestrained evildoers, Gulko and his wife, had unfurled a poster with the following words written in large letters: "Let us go to Israel."

This was an emergency situation, since it became clear that the numerous precautionary measures that had been cooked up in a paroxysm of fear by Perfiliev had not worked. The transfer of the tournament from one hotel to another, the absence of open access to the tournament, the use of hundreds of officers from the KGB, the internal affairs ministry, and the police – all of this turned out to be useless. Gulko and Akhsharumova were standing on the street with their poster and there was nothing to be done about them.

In front of Davnis, the crowd of people gathered in front of the entrance to the hotel began to direct its attention toward the protesters with the poster. The situation was spinning out of control. There was no time to issue orders of any

kind. Furious, Davnis – who ran many kilometers every day – crossed Leninsky Prospect in a few bounding leaps, grabbed the illfated poster, and tore it to shreds. Turning the two troublemakers over to the police, Davnis returned triumphantly to the post of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, bringing along the torn-up poster as a trophy. The remains of the poster were added to the Gulkos' file.

The Gulkos had been able to reach the location of the tournament undetected because of certain peculiarities in the schedule of the KGB's surveillance service. As a rule, the surveillance service ended its work at midnight. Only in rare cases was surveillance kept up around-the-clock. For around-the-clock surveillance, the number of operatives had to be doubled, since those who served at night needed to sleep. The same was the case with the auditory monitoring service, which recorded everything automatically at night, and transcribed the recordings during working hours. In all likelihood, the Gulkos had left their apartment early in the morning, and their departure had not been noticed by anyone.

Major Pishchenko was sent to deal with the detained couple. Perfiliev had instructed him to determine the location of a second poster prepared by the Gulkos. Information about the existence of a second poster had by this time arrived from the auditory monitoring service. Perfiliev was justifiably afraid that after Gulkos were released from the police station, they would once again head to the site of the tournament with the second poster to continue their protest. However, the second poster was not found (the Gulkos refused to reveal the location of the second poster, and the authorities did not pursue the matter any further).

When on the following day Perfiliev summoned two senior operatives, Major V. V. Martynov and Major V. K. Popov, he looked clearly alarmed. By this time, information had already been received that Gulko and his wife were planning to

repeat yesterday's protest action in front of the Sport Hotel, where the tournament was taking place, in front of a large number of spectators and Western journalists, and that the Gulkos were already armed with a second poster and moving in the direction of the hotel. Martynov and Popov were given orders to use any means necessary, including physical force, not to allow the Gulkos to reach the location where the tournament was taking place. However, the majors were not eager to manhandle he Gulkos in front of the cameras of foreign journalists. Popov suggested that Perfiliev give him written orders, detailing the exact steps that he was to take in order to detain Gulko and Akhsharumova. "You're too clever. You're both free to go," replied Perfiliev and found another solution.

Perfiliev had had a conflict with Popov. Prior to the Summer Olympics in Moscow in 1980, the Winter Olympics had taken place in Lake Placid, New York. As usual, the Soviet sports delegation included an operational group from the KGB, headed by the deputy head of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, Lieutenant Colonel Perfiliev. On returning to the Soviet Union, following the KGB's internal orders, the head of the operational group put together a detailed report about the trip. In the report, Perfiliev vividly described his battles against the state security forces of the enemy during the Olympics.

But his lengthy account made no mention of one particular fact that was known to him. After returning to Moscow, Major Popov's agent Bliznyuk ("Lvov"), who had traveled to the Olympics as a special correspondent, submitted a report in which he informed his handlers that on the last day of the games, two employees of the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport*, Ryzhkov and Korshunov, spent several hours in the Olympic press center room occupied by Voice of America radio. Also present in the same room was a former employee of *Sovetsky Sport*, Rubin, who had emigrated from the USSR to Israel several years earlier and was living in the United States. Rubin actively collaborated with Voice of America,

providing reports about the shadowy side of the life of Soviet athletes. For this reason, there was a file on Rubin at the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB.

Bliznyuk's statement was promptly forwarded to Perfiliev, since contact between Soviet reporters and Voice of America employees had to be mentioned in the operational group's report. Perfiliev signed the statement and returned it to Popov. Naturally, Perfiliev's report about the Olympics to the leadership of the KGB made no mention of "Lvov's" information, since the fact that Soviet reporters had entered into contact with the émigré Rubin would have automatically been considered an oversight on the part of Perfiliev. But Perfiliev's signature on the statement submitted by "Lvov," who was Popov's agent, remained. In addition, in keeping with established practice, Major Popov indicated on other copies of agent "Lvov's" statement that it had been forwarded to Perfiliev.

A couple of weeks after the end of the Olympic games in Lake Placid, Perfiliev's department received a collection of radio intercepts from around the world, signed by the deputy head of the KGB and the overseer of the Fifth Directorate, Colonel General Viktor Chebrikov. Such intercepts were regularly published for the leadership of the KGB. They were obtained through an auditory monitoring system known as "Arktika." The Soviet Union had ships that resembled oceanographic vessels doing research at high latitudes. In reality, their enormous antennas caught signals of a different kind: they were involved in listening in on telephone calls around the world. This auditory monitoring system had intercepted a telephone conversation between two Voice of America employees. One of them, in New York, had called his colleague Yuri Zmiy, who worked for Radio Liberty in Munich. He told Zmiy his impressions of the Olympics in Lake Placid and mentioned his meeting with two Soviet journalists. The Soviet journalists, whose names he did not mention, were critical of Soviet reality, and

one of them had remarked that were it not for his sick wife, he would not have returned to the Soviet Union.

After reading the radio intercept, Chebrikov made a note: “To Bobkov F. D. Who are they?” Bobkov sent a directive, along with the radio intercept, to the deputy head of the Fifth Directorate, Abramov: “Find the Soviet journalists. Report the results.” General Abramov, the overseer of the Eleventh Department, forwarded the radio intercept to the deputy head of the Eleventh Department, Lieutenant Colonel Perfiliev. And now Perfiliev realized that he was in for a lot of trouble. After all, he had first heard about this conversation from his own subordinate, who had given him agent Bliznyuk’s statement, and he had not sent it up to his superiors.

Perfiliev found himself in a very difficult situation. An investigation began, led by the head of the Eleventh Department, B. S. Shvedov. Perfiliev declared that he had not seen Bliznyuk’s statement and that no one had reported to him about the Soviet journalists’ contacts. Then Perfiliev was shown the original copy of Bliznyuk’s statement with Perfiliev’s own, sweeping signature on it, including the characteristic squiggle on the end, with two vertical points above it. It was useless to deny it: “The signature is mine, but I did not see this statement,” Perfiliev said.

Perfiliev’s blunder had no consequences for him. In time, Perfiliev became the deputy head of the “Z” Directorate (Directorate for the Defense of the Constitutional Order), the successor agency to the KGB’s Fifth Directorate, and on August 19, 1991, on the first day of the attempt at a military coup in the USSR, he was appointed to the rank of general. He retained this rank until August 22, the day when the coup attempt ended. It was during the days of the August putsch that General Perfiliev gave orders for the arrest of two deputies of the Supreme Council of the USSR, Gdlyan and Ivanov; yet when those who were behind the putsch were later put on trial by the military prosecutor’s office,

he denied having given oral instructions, declaring that his subordinates had misunderstood his orders (one of these subordinates, the 42-year-old Major Boris Molotkov, became so upset as a result that he had a massive heart attack). Perfiliev, for his part, came out of this upheaval unharmed and shortly afterward, in partnership with the dismissed head of the Directorate for the Defense of the Constitutional Order, General V. P. Vorotnikov, he organized a security firm.

It was because of the incident with “Lvov’s” statement that Major Popov demanded written orders from Perfiliev before agreeing to assault Gulko physically. Hearing his subordinate’s refusal to carry out his oral orders, Perfiliev telephoned the Main Directorate of Internal Affairs, which was headed by Colonel Pankratov. During the preparations for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow and during the games themselves, and also during the traditional hockey games organized by the *Izvestiya* newspaper and the figure skating competitions organized by “Les Nouvelles de Moscou,” the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, that provided security for all of these events, had established good working relations with the Main Directorate of Internal Affairs. Pankratov did not refuse Perfiliev’s request. His subordinates, who were not new to assaulting citizens, intercepted Gulko on his way to the Sport Hotel, gave him a beating, and delivered him to the nearest police precinct.

After being released from the police station, Gulko went to seek medical help. The doctors who examined him noted signs of beating and a serious hematoma on his leg. The fact that policemen had detained and beaten Gulko became widely known around the world, which was not well received in the Central Committee. The KGB began an internal investigation. Perfiliev denied his words, and Colonel Pankratov was found to be the guilty party. From then on, collaboration between the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB and the Main Directorate of Internal Affairs did not include any operations that were not detailed in joint, written plans.

Among the participants of the interzonal chess tournament in Moscow was the British grandmaster Raymond Keene, a good friend and assistant to Kortschnoi in various chess tournaments. The KGB spent a lot of time deciding whether to let Keene into the USSR or to block him from entering the country. Finally, Keene was allowed to enter and to take part in the tournament, but from the moment of his arrival in the USSR, the KGB began “working on” him. Keene and his luggage were thoroughly searched at customs in Sheremetyevo International Airport. In the hotel where the participants of the tournament stayed, Keene was given a room “with a plus,” i.e., a room that was bugged. His contacts were observed by the KGB’s agents and surveillance service.

One day, the surveillance service reported that Keene and the American grandmaster Larry Christiansen had paid a visit to Gulko. The auditory monitoring service that followed what went on in the Gulkos’ apartment in its turn recorded a long conversation between the apartment’s owner and the foreigners, who urged Gulko to write an article about his chess career and the problems that he was encountering in trying to emigrate from the USSR. The article would be published in a chess journal.

But the article was not published. Gulko gave his manuscript to Keene, and Keene, in his bugged hotel room, passed it on to Christiansen. But because this conversation was also recorded, at Sheremetyevo Airport the American grandmaster was met by a senior KGB operative, Major Kuleshov. The officer of the Second Main Directorate who was operating undercover as a customs official subjected Christiansen to a thorough inspection. Gulko’s manuscript was discovered in his luggage and confiscated (a report was drawn up alleging that Christiansen had attempted to carry materials out of the USSR illegally). Later, on the basis of the confiscated article and the report, Christiansen was denied entry into the USSR.

Then Gulko and his wife began an open-ended hunger strike. For the hunger

strike, they moved back to Gulko's parents' apartment, which had a telephone, in order to communicate with foreign journalists and the world community. But on written orders from Colonel Tarasov, the Moscow switchboard disconnected the number. In order to give the chess players moral support, other refuseniks began to visit the apartment.

Refuseniks were handled by the Eighth Department of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB. The same department organized the expansion of a "Jewish agent network" into Israel, the United States, and other countries, with a view to embedding its agents in foreign Jewish organizations. To preserve clandestinity, agents that were being prepared to be sent out of the USSR in order to work in Jewish organizations were initially held back in the country for the sake of appearances, taking active part in the refuseniks' protest actions and leading the foreign community to form an image of them as active fighters against the totalitarian Soviet regime. Individual refuseniks also agreed to collaborate with the KGB, trying in this way to obtain permission to leave. Once he became a refusenik, Gulko's file should have been transferred to the Eighth Department of the Fifth Directorate. But on Lieutenant Colonel Perfiliev's insistence, the Eleventh Department remained in charge of Gulko's case.

One day during Gulko and Akhsharumova's hunger strike, a refusenik chess club was supposed to gather at their apartment. The KGB operators who were working on the Gulkos' case were perfectly informed about the numerous people who visited Gulko and Akhsharumova's apartment and about the chess players' physical condition, especially because in addition to bugging and surveillance, the KGB received information from agents in refuseniks' circles. It was precisely because there were agents among the refuseniks who came the Gulkos' apartment that the KGB did not prevent people from visiting the apartment.

Gulko's chess club, however, planned not simply to meet in his apartment and to conduct a speed chess tournament, but also to inform the Western media about

this event. And this was something that did not enter into the KGB's plans. On the day of the event, officials from the Third Division of the Eleventh Department, headed by Colonel Tarasov, cordoned off the apartment. Everyone who came to visit the Gulkos was arrested and handed over to the police for an identity check. Reports were written up claiming that the detained individuals had resisted arrest. Among the arrested parties were KGB agents as well; they were delivered to the police in order to preserve their cover.

One of them was a tall, broad-shouldered, handsome, middle-aged man, who acted insolently at the moment of his apprehension and inside the police station, displaying contempt for the governments flunkies. He was an educated man, a scientist from a scientific research institute, and no one suspected at the time that he had already for many years been a specially trusted agent of Major Gagarin, a senior operative at the Eighth Department of the Fifth Directorate, who was preparing to send him abroad. On his handlers' orders, on the very same day this man got in touch with a number of Moscow-based Western reporters to whose files at the KGB he had also contributed and information about the fact that the Gulkos' apartment had been blocked off got out to the West.

These actions were part of a plan devised by the head of the Eight Department of the Fifth Directorate, Lieutenant Colonel Valery Lebedev, and approved by the leadership of the KGB, to send an agent to Israel for long-term settlement (in the terminology of Western security services, as a "sleeper"). Subsequently, this man settled down in the United States, made a splendid scientific career for himself, and became one of the close collaborators of the well-known American billionaire George Soros, heading his foundation for supporting scientific research in Russia. It was he who was in charge of giving out grants to Russian scientists, whom he would first incite to divulge classified information and then give up to Russian counterintelligence. As a result of this activity, criminal charges were brought against more than ten major scientists in Russia.

Another agent who was sent abroad in this way was Shabtai Kalmanovich. He was sent to Israel by the Fifth Directorate of the KGB in conjunction with the Lithuanian KGB. With the KGB's help, Kalmanovich became a millionaire in Israel, engaging in various business activities, but most importantly becoming one of the close collaborators of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, as a result of which the KGB was able to obtain priceless information. In 1988, Kalmanovich was convicted of spying for the USSR and sentenced to nine years in prison. However, thanks to the KGB's efforts, he was released before serving his full sentence and returned to Russia, where he again became a big businessman, the owner and general manager of the women's basketball team Spartak Vidnoe. On November 2, 2009, Kalmanovich was killed in the center of Moscow by a hired assassin. Neither those who ordered his assassination nor those who carried it out were found.

Valery Lebedev, who was the head of the Eighth Department of the Fifth Directorate, which dealt with Zionist centers, worked in the KGB until August 22, 1991, attaining the position of Deputy Head of the KGB. He was the overseer of the Z Directorate (Directorate for the Defense of the Constitutional Order), the successor agency to the Fifth Directorate. This post had previously been occupied by Filipp Bobkov. But in early 1991, Bobkov had voluntarily resigned as first deputy head of the KGB and joined the scramble to appropriate the funds of the Communist Party, which, right before the collapse of the Soviet Union, were being channelled out of the country through various organizations, including the Soviet Peace Fund, whose head was the chess player, and former world champion, Anatoly Karpov.

During the Gulkos' hunger strike, significant events occurred in the Soviet Union. Brezhnev died. Serious transformations were brewing in the country. Everyone suddenly had other things to think about other than the Gulkos. They were permitted to take part in competitions within the Soviet Union, including

the 43rd Soviet chess championship in Tallinn. The KGB, however, would not leave them alone. During Gulko and Akhsharumova's absence, Colonel Tarasov's subordinates began entering their apartment. The KGB's Technical Operations Directorate had experts known as "key specialists." There were no locks that these experts could not open, from the most complicated safes in foreign embassies to the doors of the apartments of ordinary Soviet citizens. Penetration into the Gulkos' apartment was classified as an operation of category "D" – secret inspection of a facility. Such operations were usually conducted with the aim of discovering objects or materials (for example, written materials) that could expose the target of the investigation in engaging in unlawful activity. It was known in advance that there was nothing to be found in the Gulkos' apartment, but the operation could be used as a cover for vandalism. Every time that the apartment was broken into, the water faucets were deliberately left open and the apartment was flooded. The windows were left completely open as well, so freezing wind blew through the rooms.

Despite the KGB's mischief, Gulko and Akhsharumova, who had recently ended a difficult hunger strike, performed successfully at the competition in Tallinn. Akhsharumova almost took first place. The KGB once again had to urgently intervene into the course of the tournament in order to prevent the refusenik from becoming champion. The KGB even embroiled the pilot and cosmonaut Vitali Sevastyanov, who headed the Soviet Chess Federation, in the conflict.

Sevastyanov was well acquainted with the KGB agents who oversaw the chess world. He was friends with Pishchenko and often saw him abroad, since Pishchenko invariably accompanied Karpov on his foreign trips. Pishchenko introduced Sevastyanov to his immediate superior, Colonel Tarasov, with whom Sevastyanov subsequently started clearing all of his decisions as head of the Chess Federation. Sevastyanov avoided direct contact with Tarasov's superior, Perfiliev. Therefore, Perfiliev solved all of his problems through the head of the

State Sports Committee's Chess Directorate, agent Krogius ("Endgame"), while Sevastyanov solved all of his problems through Tarasov.

When the farce of effectively denying Akhsharumova the gold medal of the women's chess champion of the USSR reached a dead end, Sevastyanov, on Tarasov's advice, simply refused to examine the issue, thus depriving Akhsharumova of the champion's title.

After Brezhnev's death, the post of general secretary of the party was filled by Andropov. Andropov's position as head of the KGB was taken over by his first deputy, Viktor Chebrikov. Bobkov became one of the deputies of the new head of the KGB, while Bobkov's former deputy General Abramov ("Vanya Palkin") was appointed head of the Fifth Directorate. The deputy head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Gramov, a friend of General Abramov and of the future general secretary of the CPSU, Mikhail Gorbachev, was appointed head of the State Sports Committee. As department head at the Central Committee, Gramov had earlier demanded that the Gulkos be prevented from carrying out protest actions. Once he became head of the State Sports Committee, Gramov was anxious to establish a truce with the Gulkos and sent his deputy Gavrilin, accompanied by officer Popov from the KGB, as a representative of the Fifth Directorate, to the Gulkos' bugged apartment to negotiate with them.

However, the two sides were unable to find common ground. The conversation was brief. The visitors were unable to charm the Gulkos. Popov, whom Gulko subsequently characterized as a "dyed-in-the-wool chekist" (as the recordings made by the KGB's auditory monitoring of the apartment revealed), remained silent during the entire exchange. Gavrilin, as a representative of the State Sports Committee, declared that the State Sports Committee had nothing to do with emigration issues, but could offer Gulko paid work.

At the time, Gulko had neither work nor money. The head of the family clearly looked much older than his age, and not only because of his gray hair and its practical absence. His whole appearance told visitors of the troubles that had befallen him. His little son, who looked about five years old, with large, expressive eyes on a pale, handsome little face, also had a sad appearance. The shabby furniture in the apartment only added to the dour impression made by the life of the family that had spent so many years standing up to the mighty Soviet establishment.

After the visitors left, the Gulkos' apartment was once again immediately cordoned off by state security officers. Everyone who tried to visit it on that day was photographed for subsequent identification. The auditory monitoring and surveillance services recorded that a man of undetermined identity had been present in the Gulkos' apartment during the entire conversation between the Gulkos and Gavrilin and Popov. On leaving the Gulkos, the unknown man was stopped by an operative from the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate, dressed as a police officer. When asked to identify himself, the unknown man gave the name of a recently deceased chess player (a fact that his questioner did not know) and was released, but taken under surveillance and then determined to be a completely different person, Boris Postovsky. Later, Postovsky was called in for questioning by Kuleshov, who even attempted to recruit him as an agent to work on the Gulkos' case, but Postovsky refused.

New times were coming. Something was changing. Anonymous letters about Akhsharumova's marital infidelity – prepared by Kuleshov at the instigation of master-provocateur Colonel Tarasov – did not help. Not far from the Lubyanka building, at an exhibition hall on Kuznetsky Bridge, an art exhibit took place, timed to coincide with the recent Spartakiad of the Peoples of the USSR. Among the works of art displayed was a painting entitled "Single Combat," depicting Anna Akhsharumova playing a chess game with monsters. Time was now

working in the Gulkos' favor.

A candidates semifinal match between Kortschnoi and Kasparov was scheduled to take place in the middle of 1983, in Pasadena, California. The Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate and the First Main Directorate of the KGB, which were responsible for security during the match, had to decide whether to go ahead with the match or not.

Soviet diplomatic representatives' freedom of movement was traditionally rigidly constrained in the state of California because of the presence of Silicon Valley, the U.S. Pacific Fleet base and other military sites, including the military intelligence school in Monterey, not far from San Francisco. The small Soviet foreign intelligence "rezidentura" that operated undercover in the Soviet consulate in San Francisco, about 600 miles north of Pasadena, did not posses, in the opinion of the KGB, the necessary human and technical resources to handle the upcoming match. The Soviet consulate's employees needed permissions from the U.S. State Department to travel to Los Angeles. Such permission had to be obtained two weeks prior to the trip, and the recipients had to indicate the purpose of the trip, its length, and date of departure. In addition, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the KGB wanted to get back at the United States for boycotting the Olympic games in 1980 by refusing to hold the match in the United States.

On the other hand, California was full of Russian émigrés, who had left their homeland at different periods. Naturally, the match would be of interest to former Soviet citizens and Americans, thus giving intelligence officers ample opportunities to recruit new agents. What appeared especially tempting was the possibility of recruiting a teacher or student from the military intelligence school in Monterey.

The KGB's central office had the last word. But the people who oversaw chess

in the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate were not interested in matches with Kasparov in general. The place next to Kasparov was firmly occupied by Litvinov, who also accompanied him. For this reason, the KGB's "chess players" could not expect a long – and therefore especially coveted – trip abroad. The negative attitude of the KGB's central office to Kasparov as Karpov's main rival led the KGB to make Kasparov's path to the world championship on the whole more difficult and slow, rather than more simple and fast.

Lavrov liked to say that policy was made by operatives, not by generals, and he was partly right. The reports presented to the leadership were prepared by the staff of operatives, and the generals inevitably looked at problems through the lenses of their subordinates. It was through Lavrov's efforts that Moscow acquired an Olympic Village in 1980 in a completely different location from where it had first been planned.

During the preparations for the Moscow Olympics in 1980, an enormous complex of high-rise hotels – for athletes participating in the games – was built near the Izmaylovskaya metro station. Nearby were the buildings of the Institute of Physical Culture and Sports, which possessed excellent athletic facilities, including a stadium, which could be used by the Olympic athletes for training. But in developing security measures for the upcoming games, Lavrov wrote a report in which he argued against using the complex during the Olympics. In this way, Moscow acquired a new microdistrict, Olimpiysky. Lavrov's argument was that if terrorists managed to make their way to the roofs of the Izmailovsky high-rises, it would be extremely difficult to disarm them. The response that he prepared was signed by General Abramov and the head of the KGB, Chebrikov. The issue was settled.

Lavrov acted in the same way when confronted with the upcoming candidates match for the world chess championship in the United States. He prepared

several briefs that described the difficult operational situation in Pasadena, the serious difficulties that would be encountered in providing security for the Soviet participant of the match and the members of his team. Perfiliev and Lavrov prepared a memorandum for the Central Committee of the CPSU in which they argued that it was undesirable for a Soviet chess player to participate in a candidates match in the American city of Pasadena, since the organizers of the competitions would supposedly be unable to provide adequate security during the course of the match. The memorandum was endorsed by General Abramov, by General Bobkov, the first deputy head of the KGB, and by Chebrikov, the head of the KGB. The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU supported the KGB's opinion. The fate of the match was sealed. Kasparov was denied the chance to battle it out with Kortschnoi, and Kortschnoi won the match by default.

Meanwhile, two agents had been successfully attached to Gulko, who was still not being allowed to emigrate. One of them was an accidental, but old acquaintance of Gulko's, Andrey Makarov, recruited as an agent of the Third Department of the Fifth Directorate. Makarov was used to "working on" Gulko at the request of the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate. But Gulko immediately regarded him with suspicion, and Makarov was unable to be of much use to the KGB. The KGB had better luck with its other agent, since he was able to become Gulko's friend, gained his trust, and through Gulko was able to form ties with a number of prominent Soviet human rights defenders, from whom he not only received information that was of interest to the KGB, but also acquired political capital that would be important after his subsequent emigration to the West as a notable participant of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union.

The KGB even attempted to use a foreign diplomat in working on Gulko's case, but this attempt failed. A diplomat from Malta who tried to help Soviet

dissidents took part in one of Gulko's protest actions. The KGB began "cultivating" this man with the aim of recruiting him as an agent. The diplomat's wife, who was already an agent of the KGB, also took part in the effort. But when it became clear to the KGB that the diplomat would not agree to become an agent, he was provoked into participating in a well-publicized protest action and on these grounds deported from the USSR. This scandal put an end to his diplomatic career in Malta.

The match between Kortschnoi and Karsparov was eventually re-scheduled and played in London. Kasparov won. In September 1984, the world chess championship match between Karpov, the KGB and the Soviet government's man, and Kasparov began in Moscow's Columned Hall. This was an open-ended match, which would last until one of the players won six games. Before the start of the match, the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate prepared an elaborate plan of operations to be carried out during the match. The plan was signed by the deputy head of the KGB, Colonel General Bobkov. All telephone conversations between Kasparov, his mother, and his coaches were recorded. The room that had been assigned to Kasparov inside the Columned Hall was bugged. As a result, the KGB remained well informed about Kasparov's theoretical preparations before upcoming games, his plans for moves during each game, and his psychological and physical condition. For the duration of the tournament, from morning to evening, without missing a single game, Perfiliev was present in the hall, directly organizing the work of his subordinate officers on-site, conducting briefings, monitoring the actions of the operatives and agents inside the Columned Hall, and coordinating their actions with the head of the Chess Directorate of the State Sports Committee, Krogius ("Endgame"). Armed with such serious support from the KGB, Karpov began the match confidently and was soon ahead 4-0. The end seemed near for Kasparov. Karpov was not alone in rejoicing. The "chess players" from the KGB rejoiced as well – as it turned out, prematurely.

In what seemed to many to be a hopeless situation for Kasparov, he suddenly started winning game after game. The score became 5–3. With each game, Kasparov played more and more confidently, while Karpov was clearly failing both physically and emotionally. The KGB panicked. Brezhnev and Andropov were both dead, but in the KGB people still believed that their agent, Karpov, had to become the champion at all costs. Perfiliev made use of all of the operational and administrative resources that he commanded. It was not Karpov's championship that was in danger, but Perfiliev's own career. The general's epaulets that he could already see on his shoulders after Karpov's victory were receding into the distance (and receded, as it turned out, all the way to August 1991). On Perfiliev's orders, Pishchenko indefatigably exhorted Campomanos – plying him with multi-thousand dollar gifts – to come up with some way to prevent Kasparov from winning. At the same time, Campomanos, a KGB agent and now the president of FIDE, was being worked on by Sevastyanov, the head of the Soviet Chess Federation. A memo signed by Bobkov was sent to the Central Committee with the proposition to stop the match and to begin a new match with a 0-0 score, so that it would not look as if the decision had been made in Karpov's favor and, most importantly, in order to avoid provoking the wrath of Kasparov's mighty patron, Heydar Aliyev.

The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU supported the KGB's proposition. By this point, everything had been coordinated with Campomanos, and the head of FIDE ended the match.

The world chess community and the chess community of the USSR was shocked. Campomanos's decision went against all existing norms and rules. But what kinds of rules could there be when the KGB and the Central Committee were also fighting for the world championship title?

On this day, Kasparov was born – the Kasparov whom we know today, an uncompromising fighter for justice in his country.

Gulko, still a refusenik, made his presence known more and more persistently. An article by Gulko, describing his struggle to emigrate, appeared in an American magazine, unexpectedly for the KGB. The KGB did not know how this article had left the country. This was an obvious blunder on the part of the gigantic system that day and night monitored all of Gulko's contacts and conversations. Major Kuleshov got into serious trouble at work.

The KGB immediately demanded that the leadership of the State Sports Committee conduct a prophylactic conversation with Gulko. The conversation took place and Gulko was threatened with criminal prosecution. But this meeting, as became clear later, only convinced Gulko of the need to act even more decisively. Meanwhile, another General Secretary, Chernenko, died. His place was taken by the young and energetic Gorbachev, who immediately announced that it was necessary to enact changes in the country and to reduce international tensions.

In April 1986, a meeting between the heads of the European countries was scheduled to take place in Bern, Switzerland, as part of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Foreign media had already reported that during this conference a chess tournament would be conducted under the rubric "Salute to Gulko." The organizer of this tournament was an old enemy of the KGB and the Soviet regime, the world-famous human rights activist Vladimir Bukovsky.

The KGB was forced urgently to explain to the new General Secretary's administration why the Gulkos were being forcibly held inside the Soviet Union and to develop a system of measures for preventing them from conducting protest demonstrations. But the KGB's actions now only provoked the Gulkos to respond. During the CPSU congress in February-March 1986, Gulko organized and conducted a collective hunger strike in which he was joined by several refuseniks, including women. Before the start of the hunger strike, he held a

press conference for foreign journalists. The press conference and the hunger strike together produced a rather strong impression. The KGB was not happy.

After completing the hunger strike, Gulko informed a whole series of Soviet government agencies that during the first half of April, several days before the start of the meeting of European government leaders in Bern and the start of the "Salute to Gulko" tournament he would begin conducting protest demonstrations. The KGB was at a loss. According to the information being received from the Central Committee of the CPSU, the new General Secretary did not wish to have problems with refuseniks and to have to account for them to heads of the world's most powerful nations. Neither Kuleshov, nor Perfiliev, nor even Bobkov knew how to act in such a situation. They continued mechanically followed the old procedures. As before, Gulko's plans were monitored by agents and by bugging devices in his apartment. As before, his every move was followed by the KGB's surveillance service. When the Gulkos came out to demonstrate, the KGB used its own operatives and the police to try to stop his protest actions. The posters were torn up, the demonstrators were arrested and taken to the police station. Growing tired of repeated protest actions and not wishing to draw the attention of passers-by to the Gulkos' actions, the KGB attempted to prevent the refuseniks from reaching the Gogol Monument, where their demonstrations took place. Kuleshov himself, who had not stooped to taking part in street work before, was forced to get involved in dispersing the demonstrators.

While Gulko and his wife – dressed in black T-shirts that had the words "Let us go to Israel" written on them – were being detained yet again in a police station, the Eleventh Department of the Fifth Directorate was urgently deciding what to do next. The clock was ticking and the police was demanding a decision: by law, individuals could not be held in administrative detention for more than three hours. They had to either be released or have criminal charges brought against

them. There were no charges. The Gulkos had to be released. The KGB did not want to release them. The police was ordered to keep transferring the Gulkos from one police station to another, each time starting a new administrative detention. The move was a dubious one, but it made it possible to gain time. The final location where the Gulkos were brought on that day was the 43rd police precinct on Krasnaya Presnya Street. Here, they were give another prophylactic talking-to about the pointlessness of protest demonstrations and released.

Approximately two weeks later, Gulko and his family received a summons to the Visa Registration Office (OVIR). Their long-awaited departure from the USSR was a matter of days. The opponent had surrendered. Gulko had won the game.

The Letter “Lahmed” Problem (The KGB and Me)

by Boris Gulko

To my sister, Bella, my loyal companion on the road to freedom

1. First Encounters

My first contact with the KGB probably occurred even before my birth. I was born at the beginning of 1947 in Germany, and I don’t think that the pregnancy of the wife of an officer in the Soviet occupation forces would have been left unregistered in the annals of the KGB. But our first face-to-face meeting took place in the summer of 1966.

The reason for this face-to-face meeting was my upcoming trip across the border of the USSR. The Soviet chess team was going to the World Student Olympiad in Sweden. On the eve of our departure, we were taken to the offices of the Central Committee of the CPSU on Staraya Square. There, they talked to us and told us to read a set of classified instructions that explained how Soviet citizens were to conduct themselves in a capitalist country. For socialist countries they had a different set of instructions. By agreeing to read the classified instructions, I gave the KGB a promise not to make their contents public. Maybe I’d make them public today, but I don’t remember what they said.

Gulko (r.) playing Soviet master Albert Kapengut, 1966

In any case, I certainly went against the instructions. First, during the Olympiad, I secretly read *Lyubimov* by Andrei Sinyavsky, which was given to me by Radik End, a Russian literature student who played for the Swedish team. Much more interesting to me was the novel *Report from Moscow* by Sinyavsky's associate Yuli Daniel, printed on onion skin paper, which I read after returning to Moscow. The age of the *samizdat* was coming, when some people read more literature typed on a typewriter than published in books. Bookstores in the USSR presented a strange picture during those years: the shelves were loaded with book that were unreadable.

I slightly improved the book situation in the Soviet Union because I secretly brought back a paperback copy of *Doctor Zhivago* – printed on extremely thin paper – that I had purchased in Stockholm.

Beginning with that first trip abroad, I was able somewhat to improve the reading situation for me and my friends through my foreign travels.

Once, in the autumn of 1976, I was coming back with the Burevestnik Sports Society team from the European Champions' Cup in the Swedish town of Lund. We spent a couple of hours in Copenhagen. In a large bookstore in the center of

the city, I asked the sales clerk where I could buy books in Russian. An elderly Danish woman who was standing next to me turned to me and suggested, maliciously: “In Russia.” This was an amusing joke. In bookstores in Russia at that time one could only buy ideological garbage.

During my student years, I crossed the Soviet border numerous times, traveling to chess matches in the Soviet bloc countries with the Moscow State University team. KGB workers granted me passage in both directions. Of course, it was not the crossing of the border itself that was so dramatic, but the positive character reference that I was given: “politically literate, morally sound.” At MSU, where I first studied and then worked, this process usually went smoothly. Except for one incident.

In 1972, I had already completed my studies at the psychology department and was working in the biology department. The MSU chess team, which was pretty strong in those years, had to go to a tournament in East Germany. I brought my character reference to the secretary of my subdivision’s party organization, a biochemist named Yurchenko, for his signature (for some reason, the Communists of the biology faculty were split up into two subdivisions). Even people who were not party members were required to obtain the signature of the party organization secretary in order to travel abroad.

This Yurchenko had the misfortune of being the son of Nikolai Bukharin from the Bukharin’s first marriage, and he knew well what might suddenly happen to a person if he was not sufficiently afraid. For example, if I should ask for political asylum in East Germany, he would get into hot water. Therefore, Yurchenko was sufficiently afraid. Instead of signing my papers, the son of the Party Favorite lied to me: “Come tomorrow at seven, and I will sign them.”

On the next day at seven, I was taken to some kind of reception room and suddenly led into a large hall, which was packed with Communists working on

their Communist affairs. A meeting was in progress.

Boris Gulko the student, 1965

“Boris Gulko, junior researcher at the department of higher nervous functions, is planning to travel to the German Democratic Republic with the chess team and requests a signature for his character reference,” Yurchenko announced. “Are there any questions for him?”

“When did you last attend a Komsomol meeting?” some old Communist woman immediately demanded.

I was outraged by Yurchenko’s deviousness. I had no desire to play their idiotic ideological games. But on the other hand, the question was being asked by an elderly person. I answered her politely:

“I don’t remember the month or day, but I remember that it was a Thursday.”

I was immediately asked to leave. Later, Yurchenko frankly complained to me: “I don’t know whether I should sign your character reference or not.”

I suggested that he call the university party committee and ask one of the party committee's secretaries, Shabanov, what to do. I was certain of the outcome. Shabanov, from the chemistry department, was a chess player himself, promoted chess, and knew that MSU's strong chess team would immediately become weak without their top player. I went to East Germany.

By that time, there was definitely more in my KGB file than simply the fact that I was familiar with the instructions for persons traveling outside the Soviet Union. The year 1968 became decisive in shaping my worldview and the worldviews of many members of the Soviet intelligentsia. This was the case for me probably even more than for others because I witnessed in person the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops in the summer of that year.

At that time, the Moscow Sports Committee sent me to a tournament in Havírov, a small town near Ostrava, one of Czechoslovakia's main industrial centers. Obtaining a character reference at MSU was sheer torture. Every day, I had to go up to the ninth floor, which was occupied by the party committee. Every day, I was sent away. Something unknown to me was going on in Czechoslovakia, and the decision had been made, as I later learned, not to allow students to travel there.

When I completely despaired of obtaining a character reference, the "historic" meeting between Brezhnev and Dubcek, the first secretaries of their respective Communist parties, took place in Bratislava. "Eternal friendship," "no disagreements," "fraternal nations..." – Dubcek would have been better off trusting a snake in the grass before trusting Brezhnev...

I received a phone call from the secretary of the MSU Party committee, Mikhail Maslov. Previously, Colonel Maslov had been the head of the military preparation program for the humanities departments; after retiring, he became party committee secretary. I had noticed that people who were professionals in

their fields could remain more or less normal human beings even if they came to occupy positions in the party; professional party members were a different story.

Maslov signed my character reference and I spent ten days – August 15-August 25, 1968 – in Czechoslovakia.

In Havírov, in addition to our international tournament, two side tournaments were also being played. And all of the Czechs and Slovaks wanted to talk to me as a representative of the “fraternal Russian nation.” Recall that Czechoslovakia was the place where pan-Slavic ideas were originally born.

I was astounded. It turned out that it was possible to love one’s country. To see its leaders not as scarecrows, but as men of ideas. “Understand,” a labor union activist from a large Ostrava factory explained to me, “we are not against socialism. But we want socialism with a human face.”

Socialism was something that I, strictly speaking, couldn’t care less about. Chess is a capitalist game. The winner gets one point, the loser zero. There is no hint of egalitarianism. But with a human face! Not with Brezhnev’s face, not with Khrushchev’s face, but with a human face! “Can such a thing really be possible in the USSR, too?” I thought. Maybe if the Soviet Dubcek – Gorbachev – had come to power in 1968, history would have been different. The moral contingent in society, the dissident movement, had not yet been demolished, crushed in insane asylums and prisons, forced to emigrate. When 18 years later freedom came to Russia, no human face for society could be found...

Alas, history moved in a different direction. On August 21, I was awakened by the noise of airplanes overhead. The Soviet army was occupying Czechoslovakia. Radio and television channels were broadcasting government announcements. And then there followed a live report about the seizure of radio and television stations by Soviet troops.

I felt a burning shame for my country. “Where are your guerrillas signing up?” I asked, horrified by my own intentions. “We have no guerrillas,” the Czechs assured me.

I had to return home. Two Polish chess players drove me in their car to the Polish city of Katowice, and from there I took a train to Warsaw.

“What’s happening in your country?” I asked a Polish woman in my compartment.

“They’re expelling Jews,” she told me. “They’re firing them from their jobs. And they’ve announced that they will let them out of the country only for three months. So all of them are leaving.”

1968 was not a calm year. I would recall the Polish solution to the Jewish question during my seven long years as a refusenik. What was a nightmare for Poland would have been a dream for the Soviet Union.

I had left for Czechoslovakia as a skeptic: on the one hand, whatever else Communism was, its ideology was scientific; on the other hand, the leaders who embodied it were incoherent ignoramuses. By the time I came back home, I was anti-Soviet to the core. Stalin had been right in his own way: he had brought down the Iron Curtain, and people did not see that they were living in prison.

There was considerable interest in the events in Czechoslovakia. Once, after a lecture in our psychology department, the door to the auditorium was firmly shut and I told the whole class about my impressions of Czechoslovakia. We knew that there every group of students in MSU’s humanities departments had to have an informant in it. So several reports were added to my file at the KGB.

Shortly afterward, Pavel Litvinov’s group staged a demonstration on Red Square. Seven people came out in protest against the occupation of

Czechoslovakia. They paid dearly for their actions, giving up years of freedom to try to save their country's honor.

With a crowd of dissidents and informants, I hung around the hallways of the Supreme Court of the USSR during the appeals hearings for Litvinov's group. Thus, another page entered my file.

However, at the time the word "dissident" had not yet entered the Russian language. Future dissidents referred to themselves as "the democratic movement."

The chess bosses, of course, did not like me. Was it because I was Jewish or because I had a KGB file? Both, of course. Chess, like all sports, was connected with trips abroad. And the Soviet border belonged to the KGB. So the State Sports Committee was in some sense a subdivision of the KGB. Putting it poetically, one could say that the national border ran across a chessboard.

My attitude toward their dislike of me was a calm one. If we look for reciprocity in love, why should we reject reciprocity in hatred? After all, I disliked all Soviet, Communist Party, and KGB officials. Yet I was still allowed to travel abroad at that time. Apparently, the fact that I had gone to Sweden and, fool that I was, returned to the USSR, had played a significant role. In order for my status to change to "banned from traveling abroad," something serious probably had to happen.

2. The Weekdays of a Grandmaster

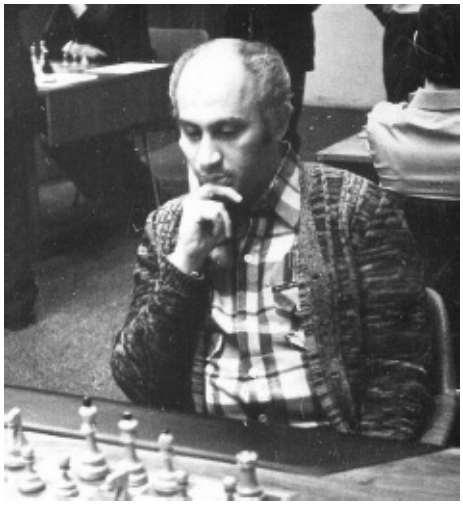
In 1975, I acquired a rare title: Grandmaster of the USSR. Strictly speaking, this title was automatically given to every chess player who became an International Grandmaster. And one could become an International Grandmaster only by playing in international tournaments. And the permission to participate in

international tournaments and to travel abroad was given only by the Sports Committee...

In 1975, I shared a victory in the Zonal Tournament of the USSR for the world championship, and I shared second place in the Championship of the USSR – in those years, the strongest tournament in the world. These achievements far surpassed decent results in an ordinary international tournament, which was all that was required in order to receive the title of grandmaster. That is how I was able to become a grandmaster of the USSR without becoming an international grandmaster.

My achievement in nonparticipation in international tournaments was surpassed five years later. In 1980, Lev Psakhis became the champion of the USSR. And in 1981, remaining a master, he again won the championship of the USSR, together with the young Garry Kasparov, without even having received the title of Grandmaster of the USSR that was his due. At the time, there was no injustice that the authorities could not surpass.

I had my final falling out with the KGB because of Viktor Kortschnoi. One day in July 1976, while I was playing in the Interzonal Tournament for the world championship in Biel, Switzerland, photographs of Kortschnoi appeared in newspapers with a caption that was not altogether rare in those days: “Another man who chose freedom.” It should be said that Soviet defectors were not in short supply at that time. It would have been harder to explain why you did *not* defect. The following joke made the rounds: the Bolshoi (big) Theater went abroad and came back as the Maly (small) Theater.



Boris playing in the 1981 USSR Championship in Frunze

Following Kortschnoi's defection, someone from the KGB component of our delegation, the "doctor" Alla Karpovna or the retired colonel of justice Baturinsky, always spent every evening in my hotel room in Biel until the end of the tournament. Of course, they couldn't have stopped me had I also decided to stay. But I didn't.

One of the reasons for this was my attachment to my family. Effectively, when you went abroad, your family members stayed behind as hostages. And the other reason was my unjustified optimism. I believed that when I decided to emigrate, I would submit my papers and leave. The books of Avtorkhanov and Solzhenitsyn had taught me nothing. What naïveté – to trust Soviet laws!

Two months after Kortschnoi's flight, the sports authorities or, who knows, maybe some other authorities – from the Party, from the KGB – decided to strip Soviet grandmasters of their status of being "outside politics." All of us were asked to sign a philippic against Kortschnoi. Of course, there had been plenty of ideology in chess before this. There were, among the chess players, an ideological Communist, Botvinnik; and an opportunistic one, Karpov, by whose time there were almost no ideological Communists left.

There were, of course, also grandmasters who were informants. But there was also a niche where apolitical or anti-Soviet chess players could find room for themselves. Not for nothing did chess attract so many Jews during those years – undesirable figures in the Soviet establishment.

And so, they decided to pull us out of our apolitical condition. If you didn't sign the letter against Kortschnoi, you were against the Party and against the KGB.

Among active grandmasters, the only ones who did not sign the letter were David Bronstein and myself. Bronstein's refusal put an end to his brilliant career. He was not allowed to leave the country, and he returned to international tournaments only 15 years later, during the perestroika years, when he was well over 60, and when the "lion," as Bronstein would describe himself in his book, had lost his sharp teeth and claws and was left with nothing but a champion's tail.

The letter was not signed by Boris Spassky, who was already living in France. For him, to sign such a letter would have been as strange as for him to sign a collective letter today calling for a ban on Jewish organizations and the Jewish religion in Russia...

And another grandmaster who did not sign the letter was Mikhail Botvinnik, who had already retired from tournaments and who wrote his own letter.

To be sure, the grandmasters who signed the letter no doubt did so with a feeling of disgust – with the exception, perhaps, of Kortschnoi's personal enemy, Tigran Petrosian.

In those years, I adhered to a principle that I formulated for myself as follows: I don't have to say everything that I think, but I must not say what I don't think. I felt that this was a matter of preserving one's soul. Of course, after the incident with the letter against Kortschnoi I was immediately barred from attending a

tournament in East Germany and from participating in prestigious tournaments within the USSR. But the preservation of my soul was worth it.

At the end of 1977, I was fighting for a place in Soviet chess at the USSR Chess Championship in Leningrad. From the start, I remained confidently in the lead. But I discovered that, in addition to my 15 opponents, I had one more. Call it the KGB or the Communist Party – if you can distinguish them. This opponent was embodied in the figure of the chess czar, the head of the Chess Directorate at the State Sports Committee, Colonel Baturinsky. For him, to allow a "non-signer" to become the Soviet chess champion meant to fail at his job. But what could he do?

At the end of the tournament I played with Karen Grigorian, a talented and unbalanced chess player, who performed poorly in that championship. Several years later, Karen (like his twin brother, Levon, also a talented chess player) would commit suicide.

At the beginning of the game, Karen unexpectedly offered me a draw, and when I refused, he started playing extraordinarily well. At the end of the game, I myself barely made a draw.

After the game, Karen told me that that morning he had received an unexpected phone call from the chairman of the Chess Directorate in Moscow. "Whom are you playing against?" Baturinsky had asked him – and then he recommended that he go all out, because this was "very important" for Karen.

Later, I heard from Zhenya Sveshnikov about a similar conversation that he had had with Baturinsky before our game in the penultimate round. After this conversation, Sveshnikov, too, had offered me a draw before the game, and after my refusal, forced the draw himself.

This story demonstrates once more the fecklessness with which the party

managed sports. A person cannot run faster, throw farther, or think better because this is important for the triumph of an ideology – an ideology that he might not even share. One can, of course, order someone to lose; but one cannot order anyone to win.

An amusing story was related to me by Josif Dorfman. Baturinsky, who by this time had come to Leningrad for the tournament, had a conversation with Dorfman before the penultimate round and informed him that, in the experts' opinion, Dorfman had the best chances of preventing me from winning the tournament. After this, Josif went to play a game with Alexander Kochiev.

At the beginning of the game, Dorfman obtained a promising position. Then a thought crossed his mind: "Kochiev is just playing a losing game – they probably had a conversation with him, too." Yet Kochiev's advantage seemed to be growing. Perhaps Josif had relaxed too prematurely. Suddenly, Kochiev found a brilliant move, sacrificed a rook, and Dorfman was barely able to save himself, finding the only possible way to a draw.

"You can't imagine the things they did to prevent you from winning," Dorfman later told me, rolling his eyes. But there were certain things about which I did have some notion.

In the last round, I made a draw with my most dangerous adversary, Tigran Petrosian, and the following day I was already being congratulated on winning the tournament. Then news arrived that Dorfman had won from a horrible position, finishing up an adjourned game in the last round, and had caught up with me. According to the rules of the championship, if two players share first place, then both become champions. But at the end of the tournament, Baturinsky suddenly announced that, by decision of the State Sports Committee, the two winners would play a match against one another for the championship title. Just as if the rules of the championship did not exist. I did not object – the

dishonesty of the system seemed natural.

Unexpectedly, by Soviet standards, the newspaper *Trud* published a long interview with Mikhail Tal in which Tal criticized this violation of the championship's rules. In those days, one was not supposed to criticize government organs such as the State Sports Committee. I was touched by Tal's interview. It was an attempt by a chess player who knew first-hand what injustice was to support his colleagues.

Tal sympathized with me in general. When he lost a game to Petrosian in the antepenultimate round of the tournament, he apologized to me for not holding back my rival. Of course, he was being a little disingenuous. Had Tal won that game, he himself would have become my main rival.

My match with Dorfman took place in Moscow, at the Central House of the Soviet Army, in a hall that was usually used for displaying the bodies of deceased Soviet marshals in open coffins before their funerals. On the walls of the hall, I found paintings by Levitan, Shishkin, and other Russian masters. The paintings had probably been on those walls since before the Revolution, when this building had been occupied by the Yekaterinsky Institute for Noble Maidens.

The match was a nervous struggle, with tons of mistakes, and ended up in a draw. I think that both of us felt oppressed by the unfair way in which this match had been set up. Before playing additional games, which were supposed to determine a single winner, Dorfman and I rebelled and went to the Sports Committee with a protest.

The idea of the rebelling, however, was not ours. Before the last game of the match, the famous coach Boris Postovsky happened to meet Dorfman's coach Baturin on the street and advised him that if the match ended in a draw, he should go and complain to the Sports Committee. Then he called me and

repeated this advice.

And so, off we went to see the deputy head of the Sports Committee, Viktor Ivonin, who presided over Soviet chess. We were immediately shown into his office, as if they had been expecting us. Unexpectedly, the head of the Sports Committee, Sergei Pavlov, turned out to be in Ivonin's office as well. The former head of the Komsomol and Andropov's former rival for the position of head of the KGB, Pavlov seemed to me a high-spirited and playful person – the opposite of Ivonin, a stick-in-the-mud from the apparatus of the KGB and the CPSU. Without even hearing out our objections, Pavlov surprised us by asking: "Why didn't you complain earlier?" As if to say that they, naturally, were trying to take advantage of us, and that we, naturally, should fight back.

It appeared that Pavlov had been prepared for our visit. He immediately gave orders to stop the match and declared both of us champions of the USSR for 1977. Possibly, those who were listening in on my or Dorfman's telephone conversations had warned the bosses at the Sports Committee and the bosses had already made this decision before our visit.

The next time I saw Pavlov was on television during the nationwide hypocritical mourning ceremony for the deceased Brezhnev. Pavlov was dressed in black and, against the background of general hypocrisy, he really seemed to be in mourning. "Leonid Ilyich was a great man," Pavlov told television viewers. "He could forgive mistakes." Pavlov knew whereof he spoke: Brezhnev's successor, Andropov, did not forgive mistakes and, after ascending to the throne, immediately sent Pavlov as an ambassador to some place that one would not even be able to find on a map. What the mistakes were that Andropov refused to forgive Pavlov for, I don't know – either their old rivalry for the post of head of the KGB, or his carousing with Komsomol girls and female athletes in the Yunost Hotel, about which vague rumors circulated.

My next close encounter with the KGB occurred in the autumn of the same year, 1978 (the match with Dorfman was played in the beginning of 1978), at the Chess Olympiad in Buenos Aires. I ended up on the team almost by accident. My wife, Anya Akhsharumova, was supposed to play for the women's team, and I had a hunch that both of us would not be allowed to travel to Argentina. But by the time of the Olympiad, Anya had become quite pregnant, and they took me.

There was nothing more humiliating than being a member of a large Soviet delegation abroad, that is, being "Soviet" among normal human beings. By that time, I had already been on chess trips in different parts of the world. But usually my companions had been my colleagues. Even at the Interzonal tournament in Switzerland in 1976, the large group of chess players was tainted only by Colonel of Justice Viktor Baturinsky, who was rational in his own way, and by one unobtrusive informant, the doctor Alla Karpovna. In Buenos Aires, on the other hand, we were equal in number: in a delegation of twenty people, ten members of the men's and women's teams were agents of the KGB. We had a translator who did not know Spanish, and a doctor who would inform on me, but only two years later. Although, of course, he informed on everyone in Argentina as well.

The coach of the women's team, Kotkov, ordered the team's members not to leave the hotel, because "the city was full of rabid dogs." That way, it was easier for him to control the women chess players. In the middle of the Olympiad, however, the problem of the coaches solved itself: Kotkov and Antoshin, the coach of the men's team, went on a drinking binge and we saw almost no more of them.

In short, in Buenos Aires I decided that I want to be a normal human being. I want to go to tournaments without having to depend on my wife's pregnancy and the mercy of the Sports Committee. I don't want to be constantly ashamed of my country. I don't want to hand over my income taxes and the hard currency to the

Sports Committee after my tournaments and having them used to maintain the Gulag and to support terrorists around the world. I made a decision: I'll return to Moscow, and my wife and I will begin the emigration process.

Speaking of hard currency, a strange incident occurred on my last day in Buenos Aires. On that day, the organizers no longer fed us. I went into a bank in order to exchange ten dollars, which had been given to me in Moscow, and to treat myself to an Argentinian steak.

The bill that I handed to the bank teller aroused his genuine interest. He took it away and then came back and told me that my bill appeared to be good. But, he explained, other ten-dollar bills had the words "In God We Trust" printed above the picture of the U.S. Treasury, whereas on my bill there was no such writing. I found another – more religious – ten-dollar bill and did not end up going hungry. But to this day I cannot understand: was it really possible that they were printing dollars in Skatertny Lane in Moscow, where the Sports Committee of the USSR was then located? It's hard to imagine that the U.S. mint should have printed a single, godless copy of a ten-dollar bill for me personally.

3. Our Game Against the KGB: The Opening

Today, it's hard for me to say which of us first realized that it was time for us to leave. I'm older than Anya by ten years and, of course, had more life experience. But I remember how Anya once said to me: "You've often said that one shouldn't live in the USSR. So when are we going to file papers to emigrate?" It's one thing to understand something, it's another thing to say: "The moment has come."

When I returned from the Olympiad, we ordered an invitation from nonexistent relatives in Israel – a necessary procedure at the time. The invitation arrived on May 1, and on May 15, 1979, on the anniversary of Israel's declaration of

independence, we brought our papers to the Visa Registration Office (OVIR) of Moscow's Zhdanovsky district and filed a request for permission to emigrate to Israel. A remarkable period of our life began, seven years of struggle to leave the Soviet Union.

A request to emigrate by two recent champions of the USSR was big news in the world of Soviet chess. Anya had first participated in the USSR Women's Chess Championship in 1976. And despite the fact that the tournament's other participants included the women's world champion, Nona Gaprindashvili, and Maia Chiburdanidze, who would take over this high title in 1978, as well as all of the other top female chess players in the world, Anya won the championship. Former world champion Mikhail Botvinnik, who played before the public several times in those days, repeated time and again that, while the men's world champion title was firmly in Soviet hands with Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov, the women's crown could leave the USSR along with Anya Akhsharumova. Botvinnik had been Anya's mentor in chess and prized her talent highly. For some reason, he always began his list of his best students not with Karpov and Kasparov, but – even during our years as refuseniks – with her.

My name was often mentioned in conjunction with that of Kortschnoi. It was said that if I emigrated, I would help Kortschnoi to win the world championship title from Karpov. This alleged potential collaboration between us was confirmed by Kortschnoi himself. In one of his interviews, which I heard about on some foreign radio station, Viktor declared that his coach Boris Gulko was being denied permission to leave the USSR to join him. And although I had not talked to anyone about collaborating with Kortschnoi, such a remark was surely noticed both by the Sports Committee and Karpov.

Anatoly Karpov in those days was extraordinarily influential. He was a unique phenomenon in Soviet life, a genuinely exceptional figure in terms of his creativity and at the same time faithful to the Communist Party and the KGB

nomenklatura.

Good writers were opposed to the government by definition. Only hacks like Safronov or Kochetov were loyal. To be sure, there was also the Nobel laureate Mikhail Sholokhov, who had spent the last few decades of his life drunk. Even then, his authorship of *And Quiet Flows the Down*, published in the 1920s, remains contested to this day.

The great composer of the Soviet period, Dmitri Shostakovich, accepted all kinds of honors and official titles while he lived, but when he died he left behind memoirs that made Soviet officials' skin crawl. The most prominent representative of the scientific world in those days was Andrei Sakharov. And only in chess was the Soviet nomenklatura able to raise the kind of crop that had, in effect, been the goal of the Revolution of 1917. Furthermore, Karpov had the right ethnic background – by contrast, say, with the Jewish ideological Communist Botvinnik. And a "faithful" Communist was not at all the same thing as an "ideological" one.

What did Karpov's allegiance to the system consist of? In any political situation Karpov knew which statement was the right statement. I remember an interview he gave at the time to the magazine *Studenchesky Meridian*. Karpov was asked to describe the most memorable event in his life. Any loyal Soviet citizen would have replied, of course, that it was not his first kiss or his victory in the world chess championship (if this loyal citizen happened to be a world champion), but his meeting with Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev (again, if this hypothetical citizen had actually had such a meeting). Karpov began his answer in exactly this way. But in contrast to an ordinary Soviet person, Karpov did not stop there and continued: "There was another memorable event in my life: the adoption of the New Soviet Constitution of 1977." And according to him even apolitical foreign grandmasters had approached Karpov, who was playing in an international tournament in Caracas at the time when the constitution was adopted, and had

excitedly asked him: “So, has the New Constitution been adopted yet?” In other words, as a genuine man of establishment, Karpov was not simply ready to display run-of-the-mill Soviet hypocrisy, but prepared to raise it to the second or even the third power.

The circle of Karpov’s friends and sponsors in those days included Tyazhelnikov, the Komsomol head who would later become the head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda at the Central Committee of the CPSU, and a mysterious top official from the KGB, who was nicknamed “Grayhair” (“Sedoy”) in Karpov’s circle, and about whom I heard from chess players who socialized with Karpov.

In addition to his official titles and memberships, Karpov during those years became the head of the Soviet Peace Fund, a well-funded organization through which the KGB funneled money to recipients abroad. Around 1973 or 1974, all Soviet citizens had to devote one Saturday to working for this Peace Fund. So there was no lack of funds to send to Arafat. Karpov remains the head of this organization to this day.

Today, friendship with the KGB naturally acquires a financial flavor. According to news reports, the company Petromir, which is owned entirely by Anatoly Karpov, has recently obtained a piece of Siberia with 43 trillion cubic meters of natural gas underneath it. Experts have estimated Karpov’s profits from the deal at two billion dollars.

To have interests that were different from Karpov’s in those years was a big misfortune. I realized this later. But the fact that our desire to emigrate touched on Karpov’s interests became known quickly.

In the second half of June 1979, about a month after we filed our emigration documents, I was told that Karpov’s manager, closest friend, and confidante,

Alik Bach, wanted to speak with me. (Today, Alexander Bach is the executive director of the Russian Chess Federation.)

I set a time and Bach came to our apartment. He conveyed to me a proposal from Karpov: if I withdrew my request for permission to emigrate, then Karpov would make sure that the authorities would treat me "like Romanishin." Bach even named the first international tournament that I would attend if I "took back my move." This would have been the most prestigious tournament in those years – the Tilburg chess tournament in Holland.

Oleg Romanishin, whom Bach had mentioned, was a Lvov native who did indeed enjoy the favor of the sports authorities and often traveled to interesting tournaments. I assumed that, as the first strong Ukrainian grandmaster, he had the backing of the central committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

The unstated implication of Karpov's proposal was that, should I accept it, I would become completely dependent on the all-powerful champion. Three years earlier, in the autumn of 1976, Bach had already conveyed another proposal from Karpov to me: "Anatoly likes your (chess) ideas and would like to work with you." "I also like my ideas," I cheerfully responded. "Therefore, I don't want to work with Karpov." If I withdrew my request now, I would have no other path open to me but to become a member of Karpov's crowded group of coaches.

Karpov's group of coaches was an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of chess. It included the greatest chess players in the world – Mikhail Tal, Lev Polugaevsky, Efim Geller, Tigran Petrosian (before his falling out with Karpov in 1976), and many other grandmasters. It was assumed that helping Karpov was a kind of patriotic duty for Soviet grandmasters, that Karpov had a kind of *droit de seigneur* to other chess players' ideas for openings. And the champion guarded this "right" jealously. Kasparov describes in the fifth volume of his monumental work on world champions, *My Great Predecessors,* how during the

world championship match between Karpov and Kortschnoi in Merano in 1981, when the “Soviet leadership... announced a general mobilization” of grandmasters, “Karpov called Krogius [the head of the Chess Directorate, who replaced Baturinsky – *B.G.*] and asked whether Kasparov had sent anything from Baku...” Kasparov was requested to submit his analyses to Karpov. As he writes, “I was told that it was my patriotic duty.”

Of course, the “patriotism” of Karpov’s assistants was not disinterested. Karpov paid for it in the currency that chess players valued most: trips to tournaments. The assistants who contributed the most went to tournaments with Karpov, which meant the most prestigious tournaments.

To be sure, this highest of all “honors” carried an additional price. For some reason, people who coached Karpov usually lost to him. And some of these defeats were perplexing. Thus, in Tilburg in 1983, Polugaevsky was accused by Spassky of deliberately losing to Karpov, when finishing up an adjourned game, from a drawn position. When one analyzes this game, one can see why such suspicions arose.

In the USSR Championship of 1976, Karpov beat his coach Yuri Balashov only because, when they resumed a game that had been adjourned and analyzed, Balashov immediately put his own queen under attack...

Of course, I had no desire whatsoever to join the dubious “club of Karpov’s admirers,” and I declined Bach’s offer. I was applying for permission to leave in order to become free, not in order to become even more of a slave.

Several days after Bach’s visit I found out the name of the government agency that stood behind Karpov’s proposal. The phone rang in my parents’ apartment (we did not have an apartment of our own at that time, and my wife and I, with our newborn son, lived in a two-room apartment along with my parents and my

older sister, Bella). I was being invited for a conversation to the KGB. With a feeling of curiosity, I headed to the Lubyanka.

In the doorway, I was met by a diminutive personage who took me to one of the upper floors, which were assigned to the top officials. In a spacious office, my interlocutor, who had a spacious office, turned out to be a man with an educated appearance and educated way of speaking. I decided that he did not personally torture people.

The man repeated the whole of Bach's proposal, although he omitted a mention of Romanishin as a measure of the government's beneficence. I remember one thing that he said with particular emphasis: if I changed my mind and withdrew my application, then I would not depend in any way on his organization. I think that for a Soviet citizen such an offer was an expression of the highest benevolence. But even it didn't make me change my mind. Then the KGB man made a threat: "We might not release you." "You'll release me," I said, confidently. Both of us turned out to be right – they didn't release us for a long time, yet they released us in the end.

Concluding our conversation, my interlocutor, deciding that I had not been given enough time, after Bach's visit, to mull things over, said that if I changed my mind, I could always call him personally at the KGB. I only had to say that I would like to speak with Colonel Abramov.

I encountered this name several years later in Vladimir Bukovsky's book *And the Wind Returns*. Colonel Abramov – this is a very high rank in the KGB – oversaw the crackdown on the demonstration on Pushkinskaya Square, arresting dissidents and Bukovsky himself. So for some reason I had a conversation with a person from the department that fought against dissidents, not with someone from the Jewish department, which dealt with people who wanted to leave for Israel.

After we submitted our documents, we had several other conversations with various officials. The conversation with Baturinsky, who was still the head of the chess division at the time, was a mere formality. A smart guy, he understood that I wouldn't "take back my move." More interesting were the conversations with the head of the Moscow Chess Federation and the professor of something political, Fyodor Konstantinov. Rumor had it that this professor wrote speeches for Suslov himself, the ideologist of the Communist Party. Konstantinov talked with me and Anya separately.

Anya, as we had agreed, blamed everything on me: "My husband wants to leave." "Why don't you divorce him?" Konstantinov suggested. The idea of divorcing us remained in some file at the KGB, and several years later the KGB actually attempted to do so. I will come back to this later.

Initially, the authorities from the Communist Party and the KGB had different attitudes toward me and Anya. I was seen not only as someone who had applied for permission to emigrate, that is, a traitor, but also as a Jew and a dissident. Anya, who has a Jewish mother and a Russian father, was registered as ethnically Russian in her passport, like the children of many officials who were married to Jewish women – like Andropov himself, who had a Jewish mother. So they regarded Anya, evidently, as someone who had fallen into the clutches of Zionist Jews.

The conversation with me was more philosophical in character.

"How can you plan to move to a state that is hostile to the USSR?" the professor asked me, reproachfully.

"I see no ideological problems for myself," I objected. "If I decide to go into politics in Israel, which is unlikely, and if I decide to join the Communist Party, which is even more unlikely, then I will have not one but two whole communist

parties at my disposal in Israel. On the other hand, in countries that are friendly toward the Soviet Union, in Egypt and Syria, communist parties are banned and communists rot away in prisons."

"You have to look at it dialectically, in terms of where the countries are moving," Konstantinov objected. "Egypt and Syria are moving in the direction of progress."

I sensed that I couldn't prevail against Suslov's speechwriter and ended the conversation. He possessed the invincible ideological weapon of Soviet officialdom: idiocy as a method of political reasoning.

Around the same time, Botvinnik invited Anya and me over to his house. As I have already written, Anya was his favorite female student. The great chess player received us in his office. I knew from experience that the only form of communication that Botvinnik knew was the monologue. In any case, I had come to listen to what he had to say, not to try to talk him into leaving.

"Soviet people are the best people in the world – that is something that I hope you won't deny," Botvinnik said, looking at us strictly. "And therefore, if you agree not to leave, I'm ready to go to the Central Committee and to get them to treat you" – Botvinnik turned to me – "the way they treat Romanishin" – all of them were obsessed with Romanishin – "because if one thinks the way you do," – Botvinnik did not explain how exactly I thought – "then I should have stayed behind in Sweden back in 1926."

Later, I looked up Botvinnik's biography: in 1926, at he age of 14, Botvinnik had traveled to Sweden with a metalworkers' team, and apparently his whole life he had been haunted by the question of whether he had done the right thing by returning to Leningrad. Imbued with a consciousness of his own greatness, Botvinnik considered his own life exemplary, and if he had not evaded life

among “the best people in the world,” then neither should we.

The patriarch, as chess players often called Botvinnik, continued: “I know that you have a son.” Botvinnik, the ideological Communist, was implying that he was also aware that growing up as a Jew in Russia was not the happiest lot, and he gave us a half-joking piece of advice that he had, of course, prepared in advance. “Give him his mother’s last name,” he said. “I would have done so myself, except that my mother’s last name was Rabinovich.”

Then Botvinnik began explaining that, living in the Soviet Union, one could solve all the problems that arose. But his explanations sounded not like arguments for remaining in the USSR, but on the contrary, as confirmations of the fact that, of course, one had to leave, to escape, to save oneself. Botvinnik told us that he had written a book about his life. The censors had cut out half. For ten years, Botvinnik had pressed his case, and the book finally came out in a form that was close to what he had envisioned. All of this happened even though Botvinnik was an ideological Communist and a member of the Party, who himself knew perfectly well what one could and could not write about.

Botvinnik had developed a computer chess program with his collaborators. There was no suitable computer in the USSR on which this program could be tested. In the United States, Botvinnik was offered a million-dollar grant to come and test out his ideas on an American computer. The Soviet authorities did not let him go. “But I will fight to go and I will go, if I don’t die first,” the patriarch said, realistically evaluating his prospects.

Botvinnik’s philosophy for developing chess programs was different from the one used by his American colleagues. It is a pity that it was not possible to test Botvinnik’s brilliance in this field as well.

Soon, Botvinnik’s wife Gayane appeared – Botvinnik called her Ganna – and

told us that there was cake and tea waiting for us in the kitchen. The rest of our visit was spent on exchanging pleasantries.

About two months after we filed for permission to emigrate, another incident shook the world of Soviet chess. The Burevestnik Sports Society team was going to Solingen, West Germany, for a European Cup match against the local club. Odessa-native Lev Alburt, who, like all of the Soviet participants, was flying to the match from Moscow, spent the evening before his departure with me. We took a long stroll and had a long talk about life. One of Alburt's rants I remember word for word: "In Odessa, I have a good life," Lev said. "I easily earn as much money as I need. My situation with women is also good. There are enough chess tournaments for me. But I'm ashamed to live in this country."

After our walk, we came back to my house and my mother started feeding us supper.

"You, of course, agree that there is no life for Jews in this country," my mother said to Lev. She was highly distressed by our intended departure.

"Why only for Jews?" Lev said. "There is no life for anyone here."

On the following day, in the early evening, I was doing what many members of the Soviet intelligentsia did during such evening hours: I was fidgeting with a radio dial, trying to catch some Western station through the noise of the jamming stations. Suddenly, I heard a clear voice: Deutsche Welle radio was reporting that the Soviet grandmaster Lev Alburt had asked for political asylum in a police station in Cologne. Then the announcer's voice was drowned out by a jamming signal.

Soon, the phone rang. It was a coach from the Burevestnik team, the aforementioned Boris Postovsky. Boris asked me in an alarmed tone of voice if I had heard any news. As someone who did not have permission to travel abroad,

he had not gone with the team to Germany, but had stayed behind with the team's remnants, that is, the chess players' wives, in the rest home near Moscow where the team had prepared for its trip. Another one of the team's coaches, Boris Persits, who had also stayed behind in the rest home, had been listening to the news on the radio just as I had been. But his signal was drowned out earlier than mine, and he did not understand which one of the team's members had asked for political asylum. When the chess players' wives heard the ambiguous announcement, all of them burst into tears. It was hard to imagine a fate worse than being the wife of a defector. The image on everyone's mind was that of Kortschnoi's family. Viktor Kortschnoi's son, Igor, was in prison at the time. I restored my colleagues' wives' peace of mind: Alburt was not married.

Later, thinking about Alburt's path out of the USSR and my own, I had to admit that his path was the right one. To obey rules in dealing with organizations that are above the law, the Communist Party and the KGB, was stupid. Of course, to escape from them with a family was rather difficult, but possible. Both Anya and I traveled abroad. But after we submitted our documents, it was too late to hatch plans for escape.

In these two months after we submitted our documents, came to a decision about us. Who made this decision, the Sports Committee, the KGB, or the Communist Party, I don't know to this day. In any case, these organizations were like giant Siamese twins – their monstrous bodies were conjoined. Naturally, at the time, we also didn't know how our fate had been decided. People applying for permission to emigrate to Israel in those days usually waited up to nine months.

In the meantime, I was barred from tournaments to which I had already been invited, for example, the international tournament in Frunze in July 1979, in which the young Garry Kasparov's star twinkled brightly for the first time. Both Anya and I were stripped of the Soviet stipends that the government secretly paid to leading sportsmen. Officially, the USSR had no professional sportsmen

for some reason.

Taking away Anya's stipend was a particularly egregious move. It might have seemed that, as the nursing mother of a three-month-old son, she would have been protected by law. But talking about the law in the USSR was an unfunny joke. Later, after listening to refuseniks who believed that the Soviet government should be pressured through its own laws, we took the matter to court. The courts in the USSR were, naturally, the same kind of joke as the laws.

Meanwhile, the summer of 1980 was coming – the summer of the Moscow Olympics. Jews, who applied *en masse* for permission to emigrate to Israel in 1979, just as Anya and I had done, for some reason believed that all applicants would be released in time for the Olympics.

A substantial group of Jews did indeed receive exit visas before the Olympics – the last group before a long period during which the government, trying to choke off the Jewish exodus from the USSR, almost completely stopped allowing people to emigrate. There was a story about one refusenik who had been summoned to the Visa Registration Office at the last moment, three days before the Olympics, and asked whether three days would be enough for him to get ready to leave. "I can get ready right now, in your office," he supposedly replied.

To take care of Anya and me, before the Olympics the KGB carried out an uncomplicated operation. At first, I happened to meet Andrey Makarov, as if by chance, on the street. At the beginning of perestroika, Makarov became a famous "democrat," bringing charges against the Communist Party. Then he became the head of the Soviet Chess Federation and gained notoriety for trying to formally establish himself as an international master by submitting to FIDE the results of a tournament that never took place. But certain "participants" of that phantom-tournament objected. Actually, I don't know for sure; maybe he managed to acquire the title after all.

I knew Makarov because in 1973, as an undergraduate at the MSU law school, he had traveled as a representative with the MSU chess team to the All-Union College Championship in Balti. There, Makarov once shocked me by saying: “You’re the strongest on the team. Why don’t you tell the others what moves to make – and I will pass your messages to them?” It’s clear what notion of the law they’re teaching them at the law school, I thought.

When we met, Makarov told me that he knew something about my case and suggested that I meet him on the street near the law school, in 1979, he was no longer a student, but a faculty member.

Who knows, maybe he’ll tell me something on the street that he overheard in his department, I thought. But when Makarov took me up to his office, I understood that our conversation would be recorded. He, of course, told me that he “heard from the boys” that I wasn’t being allowed to leave. Just in case, I said that if they didn’t release me, I wouldn’t just sit quietly.

After some time, I received phone calls from two friends of mine, Yuri Razuzaev and Gennadi Sosonko, one week apart. First Yuri, calling from Leningrad, and then Gennadi, calling from Amsterdam, told me that Karpov had told them that the decision had supposedly been made to give us permission to emigrate. To my friends’ credit, both of them said that they doubted that this information could be believed. But we so wanted to believe it...

Still, it is remarkable for what petty purposes the KGB employed the head of the Peace Fund and the world champion!

Even though I felt that the KGB was deceiving me, I decided not to undertake any actions during the period of the Olympics. After all, there was a greater than zero chance that we were *not* being deceived!

Before the Olympics, I met with Volodya Brodsky, a doctor and a refusenik.

Several years later, Volodya would be sentenced to a year in prison and become a “prisoner of Zion.” But at the time, Brodsky was organizing a collective hunger strike, timed to coincide with the Olympics, and invited me to participate. I declined, thinking that maybe we would be released anyway. On top of that, I had already accepted my friend Mark Dvoretsky’s suggestion to go to Eshery, an Olympic facility near Sukhumi, for the duration of the Olympics.

Mark was the coach of the outstanding Georgian female chess player Nana Alexandria, who was preparing for the women’s candidates match, and I agreed to work with her on her openings. At the sports facility, I lived anonymously and did not register with any office. Alas, while Nana and I were working, Baturinsky arrived in Eshery, and so did a doctor who had accompanied our chess team to the Olympiad in Buenos Aires and who knew me. The question, of course, is not which of them informed on me, but which of them informed on me first.

Nana could not be punished for working with me; she was the pride of the Georgian people. Dvoretsky was barred from traveling abroad for one year. Who suffered most as a result? A completely unrelated person, Nikolay Andrianov.

At that time, Dvoretsky, who was a truly wonderful coach, every year produced a World Youth Chess champion or a European Youth Chess champion for the Soviet Union. The only exception was Andrianov. Going to the European Youth Chess Championship without his coach – Mark was quarantined – Andrianov won nothing.

4. The World of a Refusenik

The refuseniks were a strange demographic. The authorities did not want to let us go and at the same time did not allow us to lead normal lives inside the country. I think that at the beginning of the 1980s, refuseniks numbered in the

tens of thousands. Before the window closed in early 1980, following the invasion of Afghanistan, a large number of Jews applied for permission to leave, hoping that the government would want to get rid of undesirables before the Summer Olympics in Moscow. There was a joke at the time: “What will you call a Jew in the Soviet Union after the Olympics? Idiot!”

After losing their jobs, highly-qualified refuseniks were forced to find employment as janitors, elevator men, stokers. For example, my sister’s husband, Volodya Kislik, a nuclear physicist, worked in a boiler plant that heated residential buildings. At the same time, the refuseniks became the first large group in the Soviet empire – since the Revolution of 1917 – which opposed the regime. For seven years, from 1979 until 1986, we were part of this community.

A considerable number of refuseniks in Moscow belonged to the scientific and artistic intelligentsia, often of a high level. Finding themselves deprived of the opportunity to continue their professional lives, suspended between their Soviet lives, which were finished, and their normal lives, which had not yet begun, the refuseniks tried to arrange their ghostly existence on the tiny piece of solid ground that remained to them.

I attended house concerts given by refuseniks: the pianist Volodya Feltsman, the violinist Alexander Brusilovsky, the singers Alla Yoshpe and Stakhan Rakhimov. Refusenik-painters had a somewhat easier time. They did not need concert halls or international chess tournaments for their work. They could not, of course, take part in official exhibits, but they had the opportunity to paint and to sell their paintings.

Refusenik-scientists organized scientific seminars. Sometimes the apartments where the seminars took place would be cordoned off by the KGB, but the following week the scientists would gather anew. Although not always. Once I was given an invitation to attend a seminar organized by Viktor Brailovsky, a

professor of mathematics, at his apartment. Before going to his seminar, I caught Voice of America on the radio and heard that Viktor Brailovsky had been arrested the night before. We met only several years later, when he returned from exile.

I attended a seminar organized by the genetic biologist Valery Soyfer in his apartment. The report that I delivered at this seminar, “Chess as a Cultural Phenomenon,” was very well received. “It’s been a long time since I derived such pleasure from the genre of conversation,” a cardiologist who attended Soyfer’s seminars told me.

The natural social environment for the refuseniks was Moscow’s dissident intelligentsia. During those years, I became friends with the prominent Russian writer Georgi Vladimov. After Andrei Sakharov was sent out of Moscow and into internal exile at the beginning of 1980, Vladimov became the Soviet dissident who was most famous outside the USSR.

Of course, I had read Vladimov’s wonderful, although not numerous, works long before we met. I had also been impressed by the lesson in human dignity that Vladimov had taught to the Soviet Union’s honest intelligentsia in 1978. By that time, the Writers’ Union of the USSR, an organization that the party had created in order to maintain control over literature, had three times expelled its most worthy members. Boris Pasternak, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Lydia Chukovskaya had struggled desperately against their expulsions. But in November 1978, when I was playing for the Soviet team at the Chess Olympiad in Buenos Aires, newspapers in different languages appeared on stands and I saw a picture of Vladimov smoking a cigarette. The newspapers printed his open letter to the Writers’ Union of the USSR. In this letter, Vladimov declared that he was resigning from the Writers’ Union and cutting all ties to it. Vladimov used a splendid chess-inspired image. A writers’ union full of writers whose books no one buys and no one reads, he wrote, which controls writers whose books *are*

bought and read, is like a strange chess problem: gray to move and win (in Russian, “gray” is a synonym for “mediocre”).

In his tiny apartment in the Fili neighborhood of Moscow, Vladimov lived under siege. KGB agents could be sensed – and were invisibly present, somewhere nearby. Once, I accidentally managed to save a small part of Vladimov’s library.

Refuseniks and dissidents were the natural channel through which banned books penetrated from the West into the Soviet Union. The *tamizdat*, as we called books published abroad, to distinguish them from the *samizdat*, arrived in the luggage of tourists and, apparently, also by diplomatic mail. Refuseniks were the channel mainly for Zionist and Jewish literature, dissidents for everything else. At one point, photocopies of Kortschnoi’s book *Anti-Chess* spread around Moscow with a dedication to me on the title page from the anti-hero of this book, Raymond Keene.

Once, after spending an evening at the Vladimovs’, I came back home loaded with books that I had borrowed from the writer. Later that same evening, the KGB raided his apartment, searched it, and confiscated all of his *tamizdat*. The only books that remained were the ones that I had carried away. I later regretted that I had not taken more.

Let me preserve one story that I heard from Vladimov. The writer and his wife, Natasha, once went to visit Andrei Sakharov at the Sakharovs’ famous apartment on Chkalov Street. At a certain point, Vladimov and Sakharov simultaneously noticed a cockroach crawling in a corner of the room. Sakharov dumped out the contents of a pillbox onto a napkin, captured the insect in the pillbox, and was about to throw the captive out the window.

“Won’t it die?” the writer asked.

Sakharov put the pillbox with the cockroach on the windowsill, sat down at the

table, jotted down some calculations on a piece of paper, and reported:

“It won’t die.” Then he picked up the pillbox and threw the cockroach out the window.

The style of Vladimov’s books was somewhat reminiscent of the style of Remarque and Hemingway, the first modern Western writers published in the USSR when the Iron Curtain was lifted slightly during the years of the “thaw.” Vladimov was drawn to this style in life as well. A big impression on him was made by the story of the sailor who ran away from a Soviet ship in Sweden and then sent a single engine airplane, flown by a daring Swede, to a deserted shore of the Baltic Sea to pick up his wife and daughter. Apparently, he liked this story for its literary qualities. For unknown reasons, the wife and daughter did not show up at the appointed spot, and the Swede departed alone.

When in 1983 pressure from the KGB forced Georgi and his wife, Natasha, to leave the USSR, Vladimov suggested to me that we could repeat this maneuver. I accepted the idea, even bought a map of Karelia and started thinking about where an airplane could fly from Sweden. Three years later, in 1986, after we left the USSR, Vladimov told me that he had found an airplane but that there was no pilot who was prepared to embark on such a risky journey. In 1988, Mathias Rust landed his Cessna in Red Square; where was he when we needed him?

The wonderful essayist, poet, and prose writer Yuri Karabchievsky became a close friend of ours. Yuri was a pathologically honest and harmonious person. At the time we first met, not a single word of his had been published in the USSR, since he was physically incapable of working with publishers that were under the control of censors. But Karabchievsky did not attempt to leave the Soviet Union either, since he felt that he was a part of Russian culture. Yuri published his works in the West and earned a living by working as an engineer, an appliance

technician. The KGB did not grab him, most likely, because Karabchievsky was not an anti-Soviet writer; he was simply completely not Soviet, that is, he was honest and harmonious in every letter he wrote.

Karabchievsky's life would undergo a metamorphosis during the perestroika years. All of his works were published in Russia. He became popular. But he was unable to bear the disappearance of the culture which he had once refused to leave. In an essay, he compared the uncensored, free Russian culture of which he was a part during the Gorbachev years with Balzac's wild ass's skin – a poisoned gift. In 1992, he committed suicide. I have a feeling of guilt toward him. Could something have been done from America to save him? Probably.

Poet and essayist Yuri Karabchievsky

The poet, translator, and memoirist Semyon Izrailevich Lipkin also made a vivid impression on me. He and his wife, the poet Inna Lisnianskaya, became dissidents almost involuntarily. In 1979, Lipkin, Lisnianskaya, and Russia's

other best writers published an uncensored literary almanac, *Metropol*. When two lesser-known participants of the project, Yevgeny Popov and Viktor Erofeyev, were expelled from the Writers' Union for such disloyalty to the censors, the others, by prior agreement, also had to resign from the Writers' Union as a sign of protest. But the only ones who actually did so were the literary almanac's editor, Vasily Aksyonov, and Lipkin and Lisnianskaya.

Semyon Izrailevich was a part of a legendary culture; he had grown up in Jewish Odessa at the beginning of the century. His friends had included Osip Mandelstam, Isaac Babel, Vasily Grossman, about whom he wrote memoirs, and he was an expert in Oriental cultures, translating all of the major Oriental epics into Russian.

Here is a short anecdote that I heard from Semyon Izrailevich: the young Lipkin and Mikhail Bulgakov are waiting for a tram on Nogin Square. They wait for a long time, in silence. Today, Nogin Square has a different name and the place where Lipkin and Bulgakov waited for the tram is marked with a statue of two men – who are not the heroes of this story, however, but for some reason, Cyril and Methodius.

Just to say something, Lipkin remarks:

"The trams don't seem to be working."

"I'm not surprised that the trams aren't working. I'm surprised that the trams *are* working," Bulgakov replies.

I remember an idea that I heard from Lipkin, which has not withstood the test of time. Once, I asked Semyon Izrailevich, a connoisseur and translator of the poetry of the Muslim East, why nations that a thousand years ago had possessed the most developed culture in the world were today lagging so far behind. "Old nations lose their dynamism," he explained to me. "These nations are played

out.” Now, no one would say that the Muslim nations are played out.

5. The First Battles

Meanwhile, more than a year had passed since we had submitted our application to the Visa Registration Office, and there was still no response. The absence of a response was itself a response. We decided to stage our first protest action, a week-long hunger strike. We scheduled it to coincide with the World Chess Olympiad in Malta, November 1980. Before the hunger strike, I sent out letters to the chess federations of major countries, asking for their support. Sending a letter abroad in those days was the same as sending it to the KGB. The problem was not that they would read it. Since we wrote about our hunger strike to the State Sports Committee, the KGB knew about it already. The problem was that the letter would not reach its destination. Vladimov’s connections helped – the letters were sent by diplomatic mail.

The hunger strike produced two results, both of them different from what we had expected. First, we were allowed to participate in official competitions within the USSR; and second, I had an attack of renal colic brought on by the hunger strike. After a horrible night, during which I twice called for an ambulance, I went in the morning to the local clinic. The young doctor heard me out and, for some reason with poorly-concealed contempt, told me that I had appendicitis. I pointed out that I’d had my appendix removed ten years ago and decided not to seek her medical help.

These were the years when the Soviet healthcare system began falling apart before our eyes. The Soviet school system, which had until then preserved certain traditions since pre-Revolutionary times, started collapsing as well. The Soviet Union was rapidly nearing its end.

As for participating in Soviet tournaments, after a few hesitations we decided to

return to them. We reasoned that the authorities would not enjoy seeing us win and would let us go.

Anya was the first to play, in the late winter of 1981. She took part in the Moscow women's championship of Moscow and easily won it.

The Moscow men's championship took place in May 1981 and was, in all seriousness, a major organizational success for the head of the Moscow Chess Federation, Konstantinov. Thirteen grandmasters participated in the championship, since the tournament was an open one. The organizers invited Rafik Vaganian from Armenia, Lev Psakhis, the new champion of the USSR, from Krasnoyarsk, and others. They did not want to allow me to play, I wrote a letter of complaint to Tyazhelnikov, the head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda at the Central Committee of the CPSU, and was included in the tournament. During my years as a refusenik, I wrote an unbelievable number of letters of complaint and became a consummate master at writing them. Alas, after we emigrated my skills became useless.

It turned out that in trying to bar me from playing, the Moscow officials had been right in their own way. I ruined their tournament. First, "after his famous hunger strike," as Konstantinov put it in his closing remarks at the championship, I played with great élan and convincingly won the tournament. The event was covered by *Sovetsky Sport*. After describing seven of the eight games played in each round – mine was omitted – the newspaper would have to list the players' positions. And here, my name was invariably first on the list.

But the main unpleasantness was waiting for them at the championship's closing ceremony. In the biggest hall of the Central Chess Club of the USSR, behind a long table, sat the Moscow officials. The hall was full of people. The officials began praising one another for the tournament's excellent organization, which was indeed good. At the end of the event, after they finished praising each other

and began to relax, I walked up to the table and announced that I wanted to say a few words.

The spring of 1981 was a special time in the world of chess. The second world championship match between Karpov and Kortschnoi – scheduled to take place in Merano, Italy, was approaching. That battle, between the hero of the Soviet system and the "renegade" and runaway, marked a high point of shamelessness and amorality in the history of chess and of sports in general. In terms of ignominy, only the soccer match between Kiev's Dynamo and the Germans in German-occupied Kiev in 1941 or 1942 could rival the battle between Kortschnoi and Karpov. According to legend, the Dynamo players, who had won the game, were executed.

In the summer before the first world championship match between Karpov and Kortschnoi, which took place in the Philippines in the autumn of 1978, the Soviet government arrested Viktor's son, Igor, in Moscow. Igor's crime against the state consisted in the fact that he wanted to leave the USSR and join his father. He was asked, instead, to join the army. Actually, Igor Kortschnoi had become a pawn in the game "The KGB vs. Viktor Kortschnoi." After Igor refused to enter the army, he was sentenced to three years in prison.

To my mind, to conduct a world championship match under such circumstances was completely unthinkable. Since ancient times, after people stopped sacrificing their sons to pagan gods, nothing more revolting could be imagined than a match in which the son of one participant was effectively in the hands of the other.

And now, a second such match was supposed to start in Italy. FIDE President Fridrik Olafsson, an Icelandic grandmaster and lawyer, and the last president of the World Chess Federation who was a representative of the Western world, took steps to obtain Igor Kortschnoi's release. He postponed the start of the match for

one month in order to give the Soviet government time to release Igor. In response, the Soviets organized a letter-writing campaign, in the USSR's most popular newspaper, *Sovetsky Sport*, against Olafsson's decision. Various grandmasters "wrote" how bad it was to break the rules of the match. I remember one gem in particular: "The reporters were unable to reach the West German grandmaster Robert Hübner, but Herr Müller, an acquaintance of Hübner's, told the reporters that he knows that Hübner disapproves of Olafsson's decision."

And so, I walked up to the table. I thanked the organizers of the championship, and then I read out our open letter to the Chess Federation of the USSR. We urged the federation to obtain the release of Igor Kortschnoi. We described the situation, a match being played while Viktor Kortschnoi's son languished in a Soviet prison, as humiliating for Karpov, since under such circumstances there could be no talk of the players being on an equal footing. We concluded the letter with a dramatic line: "The shadow of prison bars must not fall on the chessboard."

A heavy silence fell over the hall. Even the author of Suslov's speeches could squeeze nothing more out of himself than: "Unclear." The public began to depart without speaking. In the crowd on the stairs, an old man, without saying a word, shook my hand.

On the same evening, Voice of America radio reported that I had read our letter at the tournament's closing ceremony. Of the Western reporters that I had invited, three Americans had been present in the hall of the Central Chess Club during the event. The *New York Times* ran a front-page story about my speech.

Naturally, not everyone approved of our letter. The head of the Moscow Sports Committee, Kovalyov, who was one of the officials at that closing ceremony, declared at a meeting at a sports clinic several days later that I was mentally ill

and needed treatment. Fortunately, this talk of “treatment” went no further than Kovalyov’s remark.

Sometime after I read our letter, I had another conversation with Karpov’s manager, Alexander Bach. He told me that “Anatoly is furious” because I had “ruined everything.” What had I ruined? Apparently, it had never even occurred to Karpov that there was a fair way to play chess, with the opponents on an equal footing.

Meanwhile, we continued participating in official competitions. In the autumn of 1981, thanks to the KGB’s efforts, I won the prestigious First League of the USSR Championship in Volgodonsk, achieving a perfect score. What happened was this. The event was a qualifying tournament. Its four winners would enter the USSR Championship. After winning an important game in the antepenultimate round, I assumed that the tournament was over for me. In the penultimate round, I made a quick draw against Evgeny Vladimirov, a grandmaster who did not play well in Volgodonsk, and in the last round I hoped to make an equally rapid draw against Nukhim (Nyuma) Rashkovsky. At the very least, such a draw would have led to me and Nyuma sharing the first three places and it would have put us both in the USSR Championship. But at this point higher powers intervened, or more accurately, lower powers, the demons from the KGB.

In the final days of the tournament, two officials from the Chess Directorate of the State Sports Committee, Mikhail Beylin and Oleg Stetsko, arrived in Volgodonsk with instructions to try to prevent me from qualifying for the USSR Championship. Beylin was a classic representative of a particular type of Soviet official: freedom-loving in words, he assiduously carried out the orders of the KGB, with which he collaborated his entire life.

Beylin had things to offer to Nyuma. Rashkovsky was at that time the only

Soviet grandmaster who had never been allowed to travel to foreign countries, not even those foreign countries which were not really foreign. Why Nyuma was subject to such persecution, I don't know.

Beylin promised Rashkovsky that if he won his game against me, he would be sent to a tournament in Romania. It's easy to say "win." Nyuma had been badly beaten by me more than once. And Nyuma decided to doubly insure himself by winning against an outside competitor in the penultimate round. That would have allowed him to play with me without any worries. Even a defeat would have left him qualified for the USSR Championship.

Naturally, Nyuma was so nervous that he lost both to the outsider competitor and, in the final round, to me. That being the case, the game indeed became decisive for him.

Returning to Alma-Ata, where he was then living, Nyuma asked the Central Committee of the Kazakhstan Communist Party to get him included in the USSR Championship, since he had been struck down while defending his motherland against a "visa applicant." But fallen heroes were respected in the USSR only when they were really fallen, and Nyuma, who was quite alive, was allowed neither to enter the USSR Championship nor to go to Romania. As for me, I kept the entire first prize of 800 rubles for myself – no small addition to the meager budget of a refusenik household.

6. Lost Battles

Of course, we did not apply for permission to emigrate so we could live in the Soviet Union as refuseniks and sometimes play in official championships. And since we felt that we were being held back by a serious anchor, we decided to take serious measures to try to break free of it.

The arsenal of protest actions available to refuseniks was not great: demonstrations and hunger strikes. When the year 1982 arrived, we decided to use both of these methods.

In September, an Interzonal tournament was scheduled to take place in Moscow. Naturally, it attracted a great deal of interest from the press and the chess community around the world. We decided to stage a demonstration before the beginning of the tournament.

At this time, protest demonstrations were a dangerous business in USSR. Since the Trotskyites' demonstration on November 7, 1927, the participants of such protest actions had always been arrested and given prison sentences. That was what happened to Pavel Litvinov's group, which staged a demonstration on Red Square in August 1968 to protest the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops; that was what happened to dissidents who held silent demonstrations on Pushkinskaya Square on Human Rights Day in different years. The refuseniks Masha and Volodya Slepak had been sent to prison, along with Ida Nudel, for coming out on their apartment balconies in June 1978 with posters of protest against the violation of their right to be repatriated to Israel. In short, the government did all it could to prevent people from exercising their right to freedom of demonstration, which had been granted to them by its own laughable constitution.

Therefore, before demonstrating, we decided first to threaten the government – perhaps, to avoid excesses, the party and the KGB would simply let us go. We sent announcements about our demonstration to every conceivable agency. During the traditional Moscow speed chess championship in Sokolniki Park in August, I distributed letters to all of the championship's participants, inviting them to come to our demonstration and give us their support. We were trying to make our action as public as possible.

The KGB took our threat quite seriously. First, they moved the tournament from the main hall of the Central Tourist House several blocks up Leninsky Prospect to the Sport Hotel. After visiting the location, I understood why. The Central Tourist House was accessible on all sides. The Sport Hotel, on the other, was surrounded by a high fence, and one could enter the building only through the main entrance. After that, the KGB provided ample security for the tournament. As I was told by people who were involved in organizing the games, a whole battalion of the KGB's troops was put on the job. And all of this to defend the tournament against two refusenik chess players!

Last of all, for the first time in the history of the USSR, the tournament was closed to the general public. One could not buy a ticket to the event. One could enter the hall only if one had a pass from the Central Chess Club of the USSR.

From these preparations, we could have understood how important it was for the KGB – not just for the KGB, but for the whole Soviet state – not to let Anya and me go. It is not surprising that seven years after the events described here, such a surreal state should have fallen apart.

On the eve of the first round and, thus, on the eve of our demonstration, Anya and I went to the Sport Hotel on a reconnaissance mission. "We'll come from this side and we'll unroll our poster here," I showed Anya. Around us, I saw a large number of attentive eyes and ears. Now they knew where to expect us.

That night, we made a sign with the words "Let us go to Israel" in Russian and in English, in case someone did not know Russian. We talked about preparing another sign just in case, but were too lazy.

This second, unwritten sign has a curious story connected with it.

In the refusenik community, everyone suspected everyone else of being a spy. I could not invite several refuseniks to my house at the same time because one of

them would definitely suspect another of collaborating with the KGB. In general, I didn't know anyone whom someone didn't suspect of being an informant. Of course, there were good reasons for this mistrust. Near the Moscow synagogue on Arkhipov Street, where crowds of refuseniks gathered on Saturday evenings to exchange news or simply give each other some support in their illusory, refusenik lives, flashes of light constantly went off. Someone was taking pictures of people or pretending to take pictures in order to scare them. And of course, the crowd was heavily saturated with informants. For example, one could run into Vladimir Zhirinovsky, a professional provocateur and today a prominent Russian politician, the head of the party of the Russian lumpenproleteriat.

I asked the old-time dissident Georgi Vladimov what to make of the talk about informants around us. "Don't think about it," he advised me, "and if you want to do something in secret from the KGB, just don't tell anyone."

Interestingly, the KGB was well informed about our nonexistent second poster, and during the interrogations that followed our demonstration, they kept asking us, where is the second poster? They knew about the poster, I think, because our apartment was bugged. A year-and-a-half after we applied for permission to leave, we were unexpectedly offered a two-room apartment in a nice Moscow neighborhood, Strogino. When I asked for an apartment in a worse neighborhood closer to my parents, I was told, either this apartment or none at all. Apparently, apartment had already been specially prepared for us.

Once, I half-jokingly explained to Professor Alexander Lerner, who had spent about 20 years as a refusenik, why the authorities would never let him go. In his fabulous cooperative apartment on Universitetsky Prospect, Moscow's refuseniks usually met with visiting American politicians. According to my theory, first, the Soviets wanted to show American senators and congressmen that there were some really nice apartments in the USSR. And second, they

hated to waste the expensive bugging equipment with which they had certainly rigged Professor Lerner's domicile.

But let us go back to our demonstration. On the day of the event, we left our apartment at five in the morning. Why did the KGB miss us? Some ideas we didn't discuss out loud, but wrote to each other on pieces of paper. Then we tore up these pieces of paper and flushed them down the toilet. I wondered whether the KGB would be able to fish them out and decided that such malodorous work was not in their line of duty. After wandering the streets for several hours, we headed to the apartment of my old college friends Marina Yelagina and Zhenya Arye.

Today, Zhenya is the founder and long-time director of the Gesher Theater in Israel. At that time, Zhenya and Marina were also refuseniks, but they hadn't been fired from their jobs, and their apartment, we hoped, wasn't being watched by the KGB. When the time for the demonstration arrived, we went to catch a taxi.

We didn't catch a taxi, of course, but hired a gypsy cab. Jumping out of the car on the shoulder of Leninsky Prospect, we saw in front of the gates of the Sport Hotel an enormous crowd of chess fans, who had come to see Kasparov, Tal, and the other stars participating in the tournament. They did not yet know that the tournament was closed to them. As compensation, they had in store for them another kind of episode from the lives of grandmasters.

As soon as we made it to the sidewalk, we immediately unrolled our poster. The crowd did not see us. People were facing the gates and had their backs to us. But suddenly someone noticed us. The crowd began to turn around. Now the KGB agents who were waiting for us noticed us too. An enormous, bald-headed figure detached itself from the gates and started moving toward us in giant leaps. It resembled a running orangutan. This creature threw itself on our poster and the

fruits of Anya's calligraphic labors vanished. Then it grabbed us and started dragging us to a police car that was waiting nearby. My sister, Bella, and my second cousin Semyon Kaminsky, who had come to show us their support, tried to intervene. They were also arrested. Semyon is a poet, composer, short story writer, the founder of a musical band – and, by nature, a fighter for justice. When he told me that he was going to come to our demonstration, I advised him to stay at a distance from the main events; but his character wouldn't allow it. So Semyon kept us company that evening, which we spent in a police station.

First, we waited for a long time for the "investigating officer." Finally, a polite young man of about thirty arrived. Talking to me and Anya, he mainly expressed interest in the whereabouts of the second poster. From Semyon, he wanted to know who had driven us. "I think the car was a Zhiguli," Semyon said, which was the most common kind of car in those years. Several hours later, we were released. We came back home that evening with some sense of relief – we had not been imprisoned. This showed that our chess fame gave us some measure of protection. But what to do next? We had thoughts of staging a second demonstration. On the one hand, we had hopes for the open-ended hunger strike that we had long ago announced – it was going to coincide with the World Chess Olympiad in Lucerne. The hunger strike would begin in about a month. Not eating was also not pleasant. But there was less chance of winding up in jail after a hunger strike than after a demonstration. On the other hand, a hunger strike was easier for the government to tolerate than a demonstration.

Without deciding anything, on the next day we headed to the Sport Hotel. People were again crowding before the gates – potential spectators had not yet come to terms with the fact that they would be unable to attend the tournament.

Chess master Boris Gruzman, whom I had once opposed in tournaments in Moscow, was heading to the hall to play a game. Without being noticed by the people around us, he handed me a pass to the tournament. The pass was for one

person only. We decided that I would use it and that Anya would go home. But I had no chance to enjoy the game on that day. When I reached the building's entrance, where they were checking tickets, a half-sized version of yesterday's KGB agent, also bald, appeared out of nowhere and, without standing on ceremony, began punching me with his disproportionally long arms. I thought that I was seeing Azazello, a member of the devil's entourage from Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita*. Just like Varenukha, who was beaten up by Azazello in the novel, I had a briefcase with me, in which I carried a book to read during long trips on the metro. This briefcase I employed as a shield. Of course, I could have defended myself more proactively, that is, I could have whacked my assailant over the head. But assaulting a government official who is carrying out his official duties was a violation of some article of the criminal code and carried a prison sentence, so I confined myself to defense. Consequently, one of the spectators whom we were treating to a show for the second day in a row, a friend of my first cousin's, came with her that evening to my parents' apartment, told them what he had seen at the entrance to the Sport Hotel, and remarked that I had "acted not at all heroically."

I was shoved inside a police car, possibly the same one as the day before, and taken to the already familiar police station. Once again I had to wait for someone for a long time. At a certain point, a large group of drunks who had been arrested near a liquor store were brought into the station. One of them asked me to do him a favor: "Block me from view. I have half a bottle left on me. They'll take it away." But I refused to serve as a screen – I didn't approve of drunkenness. And in general, my attitude toward this drunkard was informed by the snobbism of one who has been arrested on political grounds.

Several hours later, I was released. I came back home. Evaluating the attack on me, we decided that if we staged another demonstration, we would be more likely put in prison than allowed to emigrate. So we pinned our hopes on the

hunger strike.

Apparently, we weren't the only ones thinking about the possibility of criminal prosecution. Several days after these events took place, a friendly young man showed up at our apartment and announced that I was being invited for a conversation by the public prosecutor of Moscow's Voroshilovsky district, where we lived. The emissary offered to take me to the prosecutor's office at once, and I accepted his courteous invitation. It was not every day that one had the honor of talking to a district prosecutor and, through him, of sending a message to the authorities.

The prosecutor, somewhat embarrassed, told me that I might be liable for criminal charges that carried a prison sentence of so many years. I chastised the prosecutor for his ignorance – he should have known that we had not broken any laws. As opposed to the people who were violating our rights.

I came back home on foot. No one gave me a ride now. And I thought, as I walked, that I felt no enmity toward the prosecutor. His superiors had ordered him to warn me. In fact, I felt no enmity toward the informants who were eavesdropping on me either. That was their job. Nor toward the people who followed me around and kept me under surveillance. Nor toward the KGB man who had attacked me. That was how he earned his bread and vodka.

But I felt enmity toward the people who, in unknown ways, had the power to decide my fate, to send public prosecutors, informants, and surveillance agents after me. Toward the anonymous owners of my life. They could put me in prison, they could set me free – they could do whatever they wanted. And, of course, I hated the political system in which I had been these people's slave since birth. Of course, everyone was a slave. But one could feel one's slavery only by trying to act like a free person.

On a day when they were not playing in the tournament, the British grandmaster Raymond Keene and the American grandmaster Larry Christiansen paid us a visit. Keene was acting as Christiansen's second in Moscow. In those years, Raymond was quite active in the international chess world. I'd first met him back in 1966, at a student competition in Sweden. Now he brought me Kortschnoi's book *Anti-Chess*, which I have already mentioned.

Raymond proposed that I write an article about myself and our predicament. He would take it upon himself to have this article published in various chess magazines to draw more attention to our situation. For six days, I toiled away, dictating the article to my sister, Bella, and commenting on several of my nicer games. Shortly before the end of the tournament, I gave the manuscript to Keene.

What happened to the manuscript next was something that I learned many years later from Larry Christiansen, with whom I later played many games in various American tournaments. When Keene and Christiansen were packing their things before leaving Moscow, Keene asked Christiansen to put my article in his suitcase. Keene had previously acted as a second for Kortschnoi and feared that the KGB might be on its guard with respect to him.

Larry slipped the pages of my manuscript between his dirty socks and underwear, which he was intending to wash in his excellent American washing machine after returning home to California. Naturally, at the customs desk in Sheremetyevo Airport, no one looked at Keene's suitcase. Turning to Larry's suitcase, on the other hand, they did not shrink from rummaging through all of his belongings and extracted every last page of my manuscript. Going through other people's dirty laundry was nothing new for the KGB.

Evidently, my colleagues had not yet grasped the fact that the walls of Moscow hotels had ears. And these "ears" could even understand English.

Two weeks before the beginning of the World Chess Olympiad in Lucerne, around October 20, 1982, I began an open-ended hunger strike. Ten days later Anya began a hunger strike as well. With almost half my weight, she had half the resources for a hunger strike. For a prolonged hunger strike, weight is the deciding factor. The following example will illustrate this fact.

In March 1987, I was in Vienna to meet my elderly parents, who had easily obtained permission to emigrate from the USSR one year after our departure.

“How is Mr. X feeling?” was practically the first thing that my mother asked me.

“Who?”

“What, you don’t know? Mr. X has been on a hunger strike in front of the White House for half a year already. He’s demanding either world peace or universal disarmament. Soviet television talks about nothing else.”

Later, I figured out what my mother was talking about. Mr. X did indeed go on a hunger strike in front of the White House for half a year. He started out weighing about 250 kilograms and in a half-year lost 90 of them. If Anya had lost 90 kilograms, her weight would have been negative forty kilograms. Even my weight would have dropped into the negative range. As for Mr. X, he ended his hunger strike before wars and weapons disappeared from the face of the earth.

We held our hunger strike at my parents’ apartment, while they moved into our apartment with our young son. My parents’ apartment had an important convenience, a telephone. True, we couldn’t use it, since the KGB had disconnected it. And for a long time, six months after our hunger strike ended, my father, a war veteran who was officially entitled to all kinds of honors, still could not get his telephone turned on again.

Disconnecting the telephone, however, created not only communication

problems for us and for my parents, but also information problems for the KGB itself. The KGB explicitly advertised the fact that this telephone line had been tapped. For example, once, in the autumn of 1983, KGB men called my sister, Bella, on this line, while she was still living with our parents, and told her that they were going to come over to have a talk with her. Bella, an active refusenik and a former electronics engineer, was being persecuted on charges of "parasitism" (illegal unemployment).

Shortly afterward, I called her from a payphone. When I heard about the upcoming visit from the KGB, I told her: "Make them take off their shoes." The streets of Moscow were full of mud at the time, of course, but my main point was: don't worry.

A half-hour after my call, two KGB agents arrived in my parents' apartment. "Of course, we will take off our shoes," was the first thing they said. My mother was so surprised that their phone conversations were being listened in on that she told them they didn't have to.

The problem of Bella's "parasitism" was successfully resolved. Semyon Kaminsky, whom I have already mentioned, was a member of some "creative union" and had the right to hire a secretary. He hired Bella. The times being what they were, this was an act of courage.

Let me return to our hunger strike. For days on end, from morning to evening, we had visitors at our apartment. On the one hand, this was a form of support. On the other hand, a form of monitoring. Anya noticed that it was much easier to receive guests during a hunger strike – there was no need to worry about feeding them.

Before the start of our hunger strike, the famous human rights defender Pinkhas Abramovich Podrabinek regretted that it was not possible to organize a hunger

strike in some hospital, where we could be observed around-the-clock. Both of his sons, Alexander and Kirill, were in prison for engaging in dissident activities, and Pinkhas Abramovich feared lest we should fool the Soviet government and our own dear KGB by snacking on the sly.

Paying us a visit one week into our hunger strike, Podrabinek looked me over and contentedly noted: “Even your nose has lost weight.” I allayed his fears by telling him that eating small amounts of food during a prolonged fast causes dystrophy. One can survive 50-70 days only if one doesn’t eat at all, just on water. So it was in our interest to stay honest.

How long an ordinary person can survive without eating was determined experimentally by Irish terrorists. Several years after us, they conducted a series of hunger strikes in British prisons, demanding to be recognized as political prisoners. Margaret Thatcher, not a sentimental person, did not relent and let them all die. The terrorists were tough young men and also did not relent. The first one died on the fifty-sixth day, the strongest around the seventieth. Evidently, none of them had the resources of Mr. X. My guess is that fat people don’t become terrorists. They fight for peace.

Once, I think it was the fifth day of our hunger strike, the KGB blocked off access to our apartment. On that day, a chess club named after me, something the refuseniks had created, was supposed to gather at our place. Why everyone was allowed to visit us except for chess players, I don’t know. Visitors were arrested at the entrance to our building and taken to the police station. I found out about this on that same evening from an interview on Voice of America radio, in which my genetic biologist friend Valery Soyfer recounted the tribulations of the chess-playing refuseniks.

A prolonged fast, let me note, is not a pleasant thing. Very quickly, a person loses his strength. My vision got worse. I couldn’t read, I couldn’t even watch

television. Misery.

During the first 15 days, I lost one kilogram per day. Then came the next stage of fasting – I began to lose only about 100 grams every day. I understood why the Jews of today don't look like the Jews on the old engravings. The old Jews had a poor diet and were very thin. I started to look like the old engravings. My arms and legs looked like sticks. But on the other hand, it became easy for me to get into the lotus posture. Yogis, I recalled, also eat almost nothing.

Our hunger strike – an event that was still unusual in those days – made considerable news, judging by the broadcasts on foreign radio stations. There was a reaction to it at the Chess Olympiad as well. Years later, Viktor Kortschnoi gave me a T-shirt with the words "BORIS GULKO" printed on it – he had worn this T-shirt at a press conference organized for us. The Dutch grandmaster John Van der Wiel wore a similar T-shirt when he played against the Soviet team.

And yet, could such a hunger strike have dislodged the stone that we were being crushed under at the whim of an anonymous government? We will never know, because on the twentieth day of my fast, November 10, something happened that suddenly transformed the course of Soviet political life. Brezhnev died.

Brezhnev's sclerotic regime had been capable of reacting to pressure, but Yuri Andropov, the head of the KGB who replaced Brezhnev, was more firm. Not physically – he was already terminally ill when he became general secretary – but in terms of his devotion to the doctrine of totalitarianism.

Relations with America rapidly began to deteriorate, particularly after the Soviets shot down a South Korean passenger airplane and insisted that they had a right to do so.

A few days after the new Soviet leader replaced the old one, we were visited by Tolya Volovich, a chemist and 1967 chess champion of Moscow, and his friend

Andrey Myagkov, a wonderful actor. Tolya was also a refusenik and had joined our hunger strike in its first days. He was staging his hunger strike in his own apartment.

We started discussing what we should do with our hunger strike in these new circumstances. Myagkov reasonably pointed out that the world was now preoccupied with the changes in Soviet politics and had forgotten all about us; therefore, we should make use of the occasion, Brezhnev's death, and declare our hunger strike over. But what about the twenty days that I had been able to hold out? These twenty days seemed to represent a certain kind of capital, and I was sorry to lose it. We decided to continue the hunger strike.

Of course, Myagkov had been right. Reports about our hunger strike disappeared from Western radio news broadcasts. I was approaching my fortieth day of fasting, at which point, according to the books that we had consulted, my organs would begin consuming its brain proteins. I ended my hunger strike on the thirty-eighth day. Anya's had lasted twenty-one days.

We acknowledged that we had lost our campaign. Neither our demonstration nor our hunger strike had produced any results. The battle was lost; the war continued.

7. Years Without Time

On one of the last days of our hunger strike, we were visited by Mikhail Beylin, the deputy head of the Chess Directorate. Beylin informed us, speaking for the head of the State Sports Committee, that we could still participate in competitions. At this time, the 43rd USSR Women's Chess Championship was starting in Tallinn. Discouraged by the failure of our hunger strike, we were glad for the chance to leave Moscow and decided to go to Tallinn – one of the most pleasant and least Soviet of all the cities in the Soviet Union. Anya went to play,

I went as her coach.

It seemed that the books were right when they said that fasting clears your mind. Anya played well. Her game against Nana Ioseliani was supposed to decide the outcome of the tournament. Playing from a somewhat worse position, Ioseliani went over her time limit on the 38th move, and in accordance with the rules, the game was counted as a loss for her. In the nervous atmosphere of a competition, players sometimes behave in questionable ways... Remembering Anya's political status, Ioseliani sent a complaint to the State Sports Committee in Moscow. Probably, a complaint about the clock.

A week later, an order was received in Tallinn to restart the game from the 38th move. The order was clearly absurd; it went against the rules. But it was stamped as a "Resolution of the All-Union Collegium of Judges." Its fifth paragraph was particularly amusing: "resolved, the incident in question shall be discussed by the All-Union Collegium of Judges." So whose order was it, exactly?

However, the order was signed by the head of the Chess Directorate, the grandmaster Nikolai Krogius; and by the deputy head of the USSR Chess Federation, the grandmaster Yuri Averbakh.

This was an interesting, typically Soviet phenomenon. I'm almost certain that the initiative for this lawlessness came from these two grandmasters themselves, who were familiar with the rules of chess, and not from the KGB or Communist Party authorities. Such highly-placed officials assumed that contemptible conduct was part of their official duties. Although perhaps that was indeed the case, perhaps it *was* one of their official duties. Naturally, both Krogius and Averbakh collaborated with the KGB. Kortschnoi wrote about Averbakh's collaboration with the KGB in one of his articles. Krogius's collaboration was obvious even without Kortschnoi.

In terms of their social status, both grandmasters belonged to the intelligentsia, and Averbakh belonged to the intelligentsia in spirit as well as in name. He wrote decent articles about the history of chess. Once, when I was still on speaking terms with him, I asked him whether he was related to the famous literary critic Leopold Averbakh. Yuri Averbakh gave me a meaningful look and did not say anything. He understood that Averbakh, who had persecuted good writers during the 1930s, was a shameful figure.

Krogius belonged to the intelligentsia in name only. He was a doctor of psychology, but his "scholarly" works were ridiculous. For example, in one of his books he presented the following "discovery": if both chess partners want to make a draw, a draw is likely. One of his works I read to the end. This was a letter to the newspaper *Pravda*. During the "public discussion of the new Soviet constitution" – which, as everyone knew, would have no practical weight whatsoever – Krogius proposed to insert somewhere in this risible document the phrase "and psychological preparation."

Both of the grandmasters were skilled in the art of living cushioned lives under the Communists. To serve the state not by heeding their conscience, but on the contrary, without using their conscience. This was the only path that promised an easy life to members of the creative intelligentsia. And many took it, including talented people.

Of course, Anya refused to break the rules of chess and did not agree to finish playing a game that had already ended – and so the game was counted not as a win for her, but as a loss. In the end, she lost to Ioseliani by one point. Had it not been for this violation of the rules, the KGB agents who three and a half years later stole all our medals at the Moscow customs desk would have stolen one more gold medal from a Soviet championship.

Of course, we wrote letters of protest to the Chess Federation and to the Sports

Committee. After the tournament, Krogius's deputy of educational work – such a position also existed at the time – began coming to our home and bringing us various unintelligible responses from his superiors. The deputy's name was Malyshev and it looked like he was ashamed of his mission. Once, he brought us an invitation to a Soviet Chess Federation meeting at which our protest was to be discussed.

We went to the meeting. It was attended by a rather large number of people. Two grandmasters were present also – Lev Polugaevsky and Yuri Balashov. When our protest was discussed, the grandmasters intently stared at the floor.

The discussion went as follows. First, Averbakh kept shouting something for a long time, I couldn't understand what. Then he looked at me and finally said something intelligible:

"You want a precedent?"

I didn't want any precedent.

"Here's a precedent for you: the game between Hübner and Petrosian!"

The incident that Averbakh had alluded to was widely known. At the 1972 Chess Olympiad in Skopje, Petrosian, playing against Hübner, had gone past his time limit and was so upset that he smashed the clock on the floor. Only, where exactly was the precedent?

At this point, the head of the federation, the cosmonaut Vitali Sevastyanov, who looked like a peasant stuffed into a suit, had had enough of the grotesqueness of the situation and announced that the discussion of our protest was being adjourned until the federation's next meeting. So we left these strange proceedings without saying a word. Several days later, we were once again visited in Strogino by Malyshev, who told us that the federation had made a

decision not to discuss our protest before we explained our reasons for lodging it. As they say, what's there to talk about when there's nothing to talk about?

Nonetheless, we tried to publicize the theft of the gold medal from Anya as much as we could. Many American newspapers covered the story, including the *New York Times*. I remember *Los Angeles Times* reporter Tony Barbieri sitting in our apartment, pressing a chess clock, and trying to understand my explanations of how it worked and of what actually happened at the tournament.

The Western reporters and American embassy employees with whom we interacted played an enormous role in our lives. The publicity that they provided was our only means of defense against an organization that, as history had shown, was capable of destroying millions of people and of sending entire nations into exile. Foreign embassies and Western news bureaus were located in Moscow, so Moscow's refuseniks were in a better position than our provincial brethren. Of course, when the KGB staged provocations against refusenik Jews outside Moscow, information quickly found its way to the capital and through Moscow's refuseniks made it out to the West. Nonetheless, Moscow's refuseniks could afford to do much more than refuseniks elsewhere in the country.

Of course, Muscovites also got their share of prison sentences during our years as refuseniks: Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky, the Slepaks, Ida Nudel, Viktor Brailovsky, Iosif Begun, Boris Chernobylsky, Volodya Brodsky. But at least in Moscow one had to do more than elsewhere in order to end up behind bars.

The Ukrainian KGB was notorious at the time for its particularly heinous practices. For example, Volodya Kislik, a nuclear physicist from Kiev, was cruelly beaten by the KGB, and then, in March 1981, sentenced to three years in prison for assaulting a woman whom Volodya saw for the first time in his life only inside the courtroom. I never heard about any such provocations in Moscow.

Gulko's sister Bella and her husband Volodya Kislik

Volodya Kislik's story turned out to be connected with my family. Bella, my sister, attended to Kislik while he was in prison, and when in the spring of 1984 he was released, she married him and moved to Kiev to be with him. Later, they moved to Moscow. Bella and Volodya were released only in the spring of 1989. They settled down in Jerusalem, where Kislik, after seventeen years as a refusenik, was able to go back to doing research and became a professor at the Hebrew University.

Private visitors, sent by Western Jewish organizations, were an important support group for the refuseniks. They brought books, which were read and then passed on to other readers, and other useful things. Most importantly, these people represented spiritual freedom – a substance almost unknown in the USSR.

Denied their rights, persecuted, cut off from their professionals lives for years or even decades, the refuseniks felt like a wife in a harem whose services are no longer wanted by her husband. We could not, like other Soviet citizens, satisfy the needs of the communist government. At the same time, the eunuchs from the KGB would not allow us to leave the Soviet harem. A decade and a half will pass and these eunuchs from the KGB will take over the country's government – as happened more than once in ancient satrapies.

In this world of desperation, free people now and then appeared. A big

impression was made on me by two religious Jewish students from the United Kingdom whom I met at a friend's apartment. After listening to Moscow's Jews lamenting about the hardship of a refusenik's lot, one of them said to us:

"You don't understand – it's not you who are nailed to the wall, it's the wall that's nailed to you. You can improve yourself spiritually. This means that you're free human beings. Instead of discussing things that don't depend on us, let me explain to you the problems connected with the writing of the letter 'lahmed' in Jewish sacred texts."

The student took a napkin and began drawing on it, explaining the distinctions between the different schools of writing the letter "lahmed."

For a long time after this meeting I tried to understand the sense of freedom that radiated from this *Yeshiva bocher*.

Our fight to emigrate was in complete discord with the organization that was responsible for the security of the Soviet state. Some of the KGB's actions toward us were patently stupid.

When Anya was fighting for the Soviet women's championship in Tallinn and I was helping her, our three-year-old son, David, was living with my parents. Several days after our departure, my sister, Bella, took David to the clinic to which we belonged. The clinic was near our home, an hour and a half away from my parents' apartment. After visiting the clinic, Bella decided to stop by our house to warm up.

To her considerable surprise, she discovered that all of the windows in the apartment were open, as was the door to the balcony and, for some reason, all the closet doors as well. Icy December winds blew freely through the rooms, and some kind of bird was flying around. I don't want to overestimate the KGB; the bird had most likely flown in by itself. Closing the windows was not difficult.

Catching the bird was less easy. The stupid creature crawled under the stove, where it was finally caught by our son. After catching it, he went out on the balcony and released this involuntary participant in the KGB's provocation.

The next time that Bella and David came to our apartment was on the day of Anya's and my return from Tallinn. Bella was planning to cook us dinner. This time, the windows were closed, but the bathroom and the kitchen were flooded with water. Since all of the faucets were closed, those who had prepared the apartment for our return had probably used buckets. Or else they had flooded the apartment and then turned the water off.

Bella found rubber boots in our apartment for herself and for David and began to clean up the water. Armed with a small can, David began helping her.

When they finished their wet labors, two thugs appeared and said that for 70 rubles they would not make any trouble in connection with the mess in our apartment – which had put the apartment below ours in danger, too. At this point, Bella recalls, I came out of the elevator. Finding out what the matter was, I started screaming at the thugs: "Get out of here, provocators!" – and they instantly heeded my call. Giving a bribe to "public officials" would have, of course, further embellished my file at the KGB.

Evidently, the KGB was not allowed to react with all their might to our demonstration and hunger strike, so they resorted to playing petty tricks on us.

Meanwhile, the administration of the new general secretary of the CPSU was working on a new approach to the refusenik problem. One could see in this new approach an attempt to solve problems by using methods based on the logic of the KGB, Andropov's own home. We came up against this new approach on a Sunday morning at the end of the summer of 1983.

On that day, we were expecting guests. We were not planning anything special.

On occasion, we would host simultaneous chess games for refuseniks in our apartment, or organize lectures in Jewish history or religion. On such days, we would take the doors in the rooms off the hinges and use them as benches, pushing all our furniture into one room. On that day, nothing like that was planned – just ordinary guests.

In the morning, we were visited by our friend Boris Postovsky. During the perestroika years, he would become an extremely successful coach for the USSR select team. Later, he would become a coach for the American select team, too. That morning, Boris had come to look at chess books that we were thinking of selling.

Suddenly, the doorbell rang. It was not customary for people to call us before coming over since we did not have a telephone. Two unexpected visitors appeared: the recently appointed deputy head of the State Sports Committee, Gavrilin, and a KGB agent who introduced himself as Ivanov. He could have just as well introduced himself as Petrov. That's why it's called the secret police – so its employees can keep their names secret.

Postovsky hid from the unexpected visitors on the balcony, and we took them to our son's room to talk.

The deputy minister – that was Gavrilin's rank – was quite courteous and told us that it was not in his power to let us go. But, he said, he would like to make our lives more normal and give us work. Sportsmen of our level received "stipends" in the USSR – as we ourselves did before applying for permission to emigrate. This was a state secret that everyone knew about, and the money for the sportsmen was channeled through the First Department. The First Department was the department of the KGB, and all sports organizations had one. What Gavrilin offered to us, of course, was just ordinary work. The man from the KGB, Ivanov, remained silent during the whole conversation.

Then, despite their polite protestations, I went to see the guests out to the elevator. I was surprised to discover a policeman stationed on the landing. When he heard about the policeman, Postovsky decided immediately to make himself scarce. He was stopped and questioned: who was he and where was he coming from? Boris, saying that he didn't have his documents on him, presented himself as Truntsevsky, a member of the Moscow Chess Federation. Truntsevsky had nothing to fear from the KGB since he had died one month earlier.

Pleased with his own quick-wittedness, Postovsky headed home. But the boys from the KGB were not paid good wages for nothing. On the following day, Postovsky received a telephone call from Kuleshov, a Sports Committee official and a colonel of the KGB. I'm not familiar with the structure of the State Sports Committee – I don't know whether it had a special department for the KGB or whether different KGB agents were attached to different departments that handled different types of sports. Probably, the KGB controlled the Sports Committee in both of these ways. It was known that Kuleshov worked with chess players. He demanded that Postovsky come to the KGB's headquarters on Lubyanka Square and provide a written explanation for the events of the previous day.

Soon after Postovsky's flight from our apartment, a camera was wheeled up to our doors, and when the guests whom we had been expecting started to arrive, they were photographed and then sent away. As for us, we were not allowed to leave the apartment for the entire day. As I understood it, the KGB wanted to demonstrate to us both its concern for us and its power over us. I must say that it was more successful in demonstrating the latter than the former.

Several days after this house arrest, I went to see the head of the Lokomotiv Ryazansky Railroad Sports Society, who had been instructed to find work for me. I discovered then that each of the many railroads that entered Moscow had its own sports society office – an immeasurable number of offices and

freeloaders.

During the perestroika years, when the Soviet government tried to find some kind of normalcy, all sports societies, with all of their offices and officials, were abolished.

The young, grim little man did not look happy to see me. Above his chair hung a poster for the PLO, a terrorist with a rifle. Where had he obtained this poster? Never before or after this did I see PLO posters in Moscow again.

The grim little man offered me work conducting industrial gymnastics classes in the various branches of the enormous Kazansky train station. Cursing myself for having dragged myself across all of Moscow to see this devotee of Arafat, I headed home.

Anya had better luck. At the chess club of Lokomotiv's Moscow region office, she was offered a job doing what she liked best – teaching chess to children.

Apparently, it was noted in our file that I was the representative of evil in our family, while Anya, whose passport said "Russian," could still be saved for the Soviet regime. They had to wait for our demonstrations of 1986 in order to see which of us was good and which of us was bad.

At one point, in the late autumn of 1983, the KGB attempted to create discord between us. Anya was invited to the Central Chess Club of the USSR, and its director, some retired serviceman, told Anya that he wanted to offer her simultaneous exhibitions. Such sessions paid decently, and for this reason the Central Chess Club's lectures office, which organized them, was a corrupt place. One had to pay a bribe for the opportunity to give simultaneous exhibitions.

Anya, of course, agreed to take the job. "Oh yes, you got a letter here that was sent to us," the retired serviceman said to Anya, handing her an envelope. At that

moment, someone called him out of the room. “Wait a second, I’ll be right back,” said the director of the club and left.

Anya opened the envelope and read the letter, which said that, while I was recently taking part in the semifinals for the USSR championship, I had “started a cheap, provincial love affair” and destroyed the wedding plans of a friend of the letter’s writer. Anya started laughing at such a cheap attempt at a provocation and now noticed that the director had already returned and was watching her reaction. Anya had nothing more to say to him.

Of course, she didn’t get any work giving simultaneous exhibitions.

The KGB made another entertaining blunder in the same year of 1983. On prominent display at an exhibit in the Central Exhibition Hall near Kuzentsky Bridge, an exhibit devoted to the Spartakiad of the Peoples of the USSR and to sports, was a painting entitled “Single Combat.” The painting depicted Anya battling monsters over an enormous chess board. What kinds of monsters Anya was battling with at the time was well known.

The painting was the work of the wonderful artist Itella Mastbaum, the wife of my friend Feliks Filtser. Today, both of them live in Israel, in the settlement of Dolev, near the family of my sister, Bella.

Here’s what’s strange: my name and Anya’s were commonly blacked out in those days. In a book on the Moscow chess championships that was published at the time, whenever I became men’s champion or Anya became women’s champion, we were simply not mentioned. But the portrait at the exhibit in Moscow’s Central Exhibition Hall had slipped past the KGB.

8. Games around the Chessboard

Meanwhile, big events were taking place in the world of chess. In the summer of 1983, a semifinal Candidates match between Kasparov and Kortschnoi was scheduled to take place in Los Angeles. The winner of this match (it was expected that this would be Kasparov) would contend for the world champion's title against Karpov at the end of 1984. And now the world witnessed of another magnificent combination by Anatoly Karpov.

The brilliant boy from Baku, Garry Kasparov, had been preparing to fight for the chess crown practically since he was a baby. The great Botvinnik had been his mentor. Apparently on Botvinnik's advice – recall how he told us, "Give your son his mother's last name" – the twelve-year-old Garry, five years after the death of his father, Kim Vaynshteyn, exchanged his father's last name for his mother's. A Russified Armenian last name, to the ears of a Soviet official, sounded decidedly better than a Jewish one. At the age of 19, Garry joined the Communist Party. By doing all this he was trying to show that he was prepared to play the role of the party's new favorite son. Alas, the party's heart was already taken.

Unfortunately, for different reasons, neither Garry nor Botvinnik before him had been acquainted by their fathers with the ethical teaching of the Jews, the *Perke Avot* or "Chapters of the Fathers," which state: "Be cautious with those in authority, for they let not a man approach them but for their own purposes; and they appear like friends when it is to their advantage, and stand not by a man in the hour of his need."[*] It was Garry's ignorance of this teaching that Karpov decided to take advantage of, although, strictly speaking, he himself also followed not the *Pirkei Avot* but a different ethical system.

Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States at this time were strained. In 1980, the Americans had boycotted the Moscow Olympics; in 1984, the Soviets would boycott the Olympics in Los Angeles. The Soviet authorities asked Kasparov to forego the game in Los Angeles, promising to defend his

rights in the future. Later, in his book *My Great Predecessors* (Part 5), Kasparov wrote about these authorities that they “pursued one goal: to do everything to prevent Kasparov from reaching Karpov.” As Kasparov wrote: Karpov “invited me to his home, and we discussed the situation one on one.” In other words, Karpov participated in the scheme personally, just as three years earlier he had plied me with disinformation from the KGB through my friends.

I heard from Kasparov that he had supposedly been promised that the Soviet federation would rather break up FIDE than allow their young hero to be harmed. Probably, the twenty-year-old Garry was under the impression that by taking part in a Soviet political campaign, he was joining the ranks of favorite sons...

To me, the outlines of the scheme against Kasparov seemed clear, and I tried to intervene. Through mutual friends, I found Kasparov’s phone number in Baku and gave it to the *New York Times*’s Moscow correspondent, Serge Schmemann. It would have been enough for Garry to say to the American reporter that he, Garry, albeit with terrible reluctance, but nonetheless was ready to travel to the horrible city of Los Angeles, and the whole scheme would have collapsed. Alas, an elderly female voice – apparently, Garry’s grandmother’s – told Schmemann that Kasparov was not in Baku at the time.

The match in Los Angeles, for which Kasparov failed to show up, was counted as a loss for him. Garry went to the head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee, Stukalin, who had replaced Tyazhelnikov at this post, the latter having been sent by Andropov as ambassador to Romania, to find out how the USSR was going to split up FIDE and defend him. As I heard from Garry in 1988, during the Chess Olympiad in Thessaloniki, Stukalin, suddenly switching to the informal “you,” told the you contender: “You’re still young. You can wait three more years.”

I can imagine Kasparov's feelings. To whom could he complain? After all, he himself had said no to the match. And what about the love in whose name he had made the sacrifice? The almighty Communist Party never gave him the love that he was waiting for.

And now Garry was able to learn for himself that the love of the heavens is far more important than the love of the party. Something incredible happened. The terminally ill Andropov suddenly promoted to the position of second man in the government, member of the Politburo and first deputy prime minister, his colleague from state security, the former head of the Azerbaijan KGB, the first secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, Heydar Aliyev. The man from Baku suddenly outweighed Karpov's people in the Soviet hierarchy – the secretary of the Central Committee, Zimyanin, and some bigwigs in the KGB.

Aliyev issued an order: meet all of Kortschnoi's objections and rescue the match.

Kortschnoi conducted himself gallantly and, despite the fact that the match had already gone to him by default, agreed to play with Kasparov. In return, he wanted the Sports Committee of the USSR to stop boycotting tournaments in which he participated. From the moment of Kortschnoi's defection in 1976, the Sports Committee did not permit Soviet grandmasters to play in the same tournaments with the runaway. Kortschnoi also wanted to get his chess library from Leningrad, he wanted material compensation.

My story might have ended at this point. Kortschnoi received a phone call from New York, from the young American grandmaster Dima Gurevich, who asked him whether he had included on his list, which the chess world had found out about, the family of Boris Gulko.

"You're right," Kortschnoi replied, "I completely forgot. I should have included them also. But now that I have named my conditions, it's not proper for me to

alter them."

Such "good manners" on Kortschnoi's part in dealing with the Soviet government prolonged our stay in the USSR for two and a half years.

9. Moscow Dissidents

Active refuseniks were divided into two groups by their attitudes toward Soviet dissidents. Some said that, since we wanted to leave the USSR, it was wrong to interfere in internal Soviet affairs. Others believed that since we were being forced to live here, we should join the dissidents in protesting against the lawlessness perpetrated by the authorities.

I understood the arguments of the first group, but belonged to the second. To be sure, by 1982, the dissident movement in the USSR had been largely demolished. Some dissidents had been tucked away in prisons and insane asylums, others had been kicked out of the country.

I think that the fact that the KGB destroyed the dissident movement turned out to be Russia's greatest misfortune. After the death of Communism in the late 1980s, when the brilliant Vaclav Havel became president of Czechoslovakia and Lech Walesa became president of Poland, in Russia no other head of state could be found than the former first secretary of a party regional committee. Naturally, corruption became the norm under such a leader. The destruction of the dissident movement ultimately brought to power the KGB itself, when Vladimir Putin became the president of Russia in 2000.

After Andrei Sakharov, whom I did not get a chance to meet, was expelled from Moscow in January 1982, after Vladimov's emigration and other heavy blows against the human rights movement, the main dissidents remaining in Moscow turned out to be elderly women. Apparently, the KGB was too ashamed to throw

them into the slammer.

I met Yelena Bonner, Sakharov's wife, at the trial of Ivan Kovalev in April 1982. I went to the Kovalev trial with Valery Soyfer, my friend during my refusenik years.

Ivan's father, the well-known human rights defender Sergei Kovalev, was already in prison, and now the KGB was thinning the dissidents' ranks and sending his son to prison as well. The courtrooms at such trials would normally be filled by "representatives of the public" from the KGB, while the defendants' friends would express their feelings outside the walls of the courthouse.

Their feelings could be expressed in only one way – by waving to the convicted party (no one was acquitted in Soviet courts) when he was being led out of the courthouse, by shouting something to him. The KGB's task was, consequently, not to allow us to do this. The convicted party could be taken out of the courthouse through the main entrance or through the back entrance, on the other side of the building. We were standing in front of the main entrance. Suddenly, one of the KGB agents standing by the entrance gave us a sign, in secret from his "colleagues," pointing to the back entrance. We ran off and made it in time to wave to Kovalev. I'd heard about KGB agents who sympathized with human rights defenders. One of them was even convicted for helping dissidents. Evidently, this was the kind of guy that we saw by the courthouse.

One of the people in Kovalev's "support group" was Yelena Bonner, who from time to time made visits to Moscow from Gorky, where she was living with the exiled Andrei Dmitriyevich. After the trial, Bonner invited Soyfer and myself to the Sakharovs' famous apartment on Chkalov Street.

Bonner's company consisted of elderly women, the remnants of Moscow's dissident movement. From the conversation, I remember her remark that she was

the last wife in Moscow who did not throw out her husband's old socks, but darned them.

In the Sakharovs' apartment, I met Mariya Gavrilovna Petrenko-Podyapolskaya, the widow of one of the founders of the human rights movement in Moscow, Grigory Podyapolsky, who had died at the age of 49 under mysterious circumstances. Mariya Gavrilovna was active in the Solzhenitsyn Fund for helping political prisoners and contributed to the underground publication *Chronicle of Current Events*.

Once, Mariya Gavrilovna invited me to go with her to Yeletsk, where the dissident Mikhail Kukabaka was going to be tried. We traveled to this old city together. Its interesting, ancient buildings were covered with strange, red cloths, which greatly blemished their appearance.

Yelets occupies a special place in Russia's history. In 1395, the great conqueror Tamerlane, destroying the Golden Horde, advanced on Russia and made it as far as Yelets. Depressed by what he saw around him, Tamerlane returned to the blessed southern city of Samarkand. Thus, Yelets' undigestability rescued Russia from the conqueror's ferocious appetite.

In this provincial city, my status unexpectedly rose. If in Moscow I was a refusenik without any rights, then here I was a man from the capitol. People were polite with me, if not downright obsequious, at the public defender's office, where I made arrangements for a lawyer to represent Kukabaka at his trial. Then we left two parcels for the convicted party (one with clothes and one with food, for some reason at different locations) and returned to Moscow without incident.

Vasily and Galya Barats were dissidents of another kind. Once, Vasily and Galya had been run-of-the-mill members of the Soviet elite. Vasya served as an officer on the General Staff, and Galya taught the history of the Communist Party at

Moscow State University. But in 1977, the Baratses announced their desire to quit the ranks of the Communist Party and to emigrate from the USSR for political reasons. The government granted them only the first of these wishes. In this way, the Baratses became non-Jewish refuseniks.

In their room in a communal apartment near the Oktyabrskoye Pole metro station, the Baratses founded a committee for the freedom to emigrate, which consisted of the two of them.

What astonished me about these people was their courage. They were fighting the KGB, but by contrast with us, they didn't have the support of Jewish organizations of Western countries. This was a fight of two against the system.

At a certain point, the work of the committee for the freedom to emigrate became sought after. The Baratses' room became the Moscow center of the Pentecostal movement for emigration from the USSR. After interacting with the Pentecostals, the Baratses became Pentecostals themselves.

The Pentecostals were a very interesting sect. As I learned from the Baratses, in their daily lives the Pentecostals follow the decrees of their own prophets. And it so happened that these prophets ordered the members of the sect to emigrate from the USSR. A difficult, torturous struggle began between the Pentecostals and the Soviet government, which didn't let its citizens leave just like that. To me, the passions of the Pentecostals ravaged by the KGB recalled the passions of the early Christians of the Roman Empire. The members of the sect whom I saw at the Baratses' looked like simple people to me. For this reason, perhaps, this remarkable phenomenon, an entire religious movement's longing for an exodus from the USSR, has not found its chronicler.

I learned about another interesting prophecy from the Baratses. It had been prophesied to the Pentecostals that after the death of Brezhnev, two other rulers

would briefly rule the USSR, and then a third, good, ruler would come, everyone who wanted to leave would leave, and “everything will be over.” If “everything will be over” meant the collapse of the USSR, then this prophecy has been fulfilled in its entirety.

At the end of February 1986, already under Gorbachev, Vasily Barats was locked up in an insane asylum. The 27th Congress of the CPSU was taking place in Moscow at the time, and the KGB tried to clear the capitol of undesirables. Apparently, during those years insane asylums were just another subdivision of the KGB. They could put you in prison, if they wanted to, or they could put you in an insane asylum.

After the end of the congress, the doctor Volodya Brodsky and I went to visit Barats. This turned out to be surprisingly easy. Vasily was brought to see us in the visitors’ room. He told us that the insane asylum had been packed during the congress. People slept on tables and under tables. They were not “treated,” that is, not given shots that cripple normal people.

Soon, Barats was released. But not for long. In April 1986, Vasily Barats went to Rovno to support his co-religionists. The Pentecostals lived on the outskirts of the empire, in Ukraine, in Siberia, in the Baltics. In Rovno, Vasily was arrested.

After our own demonstrations were already over, I arranged for a meeting at our apartment between Galya and Serge Schmemann of the *New York Times*. It was here that I heard the story of the Baratses’ misfortunes. Galya predicted that she would soon be arrested as well, and, unfortunately, she turned out to be right.

In 1987, the Baratses were freed from prison. What became of them after that, I do not know. I hope that they made it to the New World and were happy.

Meanwhile, in February 1984, Andropov, who had been dying for a long time, finally died, and Konstantin Chernenko was made general secretary. He,

however, was also terminally ill. It began to seem as if terminal illness was one of the prerequisites for becoming the head of the Soviet state. I remember Chernenko's appearance on television on the day of the election to the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation. The head of state wore a jacket, but it was clear that was not wearing any pants – the camera showed him from his chest up. Obviously ill, he managed to deposit a ballot in a ballot box that had been set up, by all appearances, right next to his bed. A reporter asked him: "Konstantin Ustinovich, what would you like to say to the Soviet people?" The General Secretary gathered his strength and replied: "They should work."

During the times – or timelessness – of Chernenko, in September 1984, an open-ended match for the world champion's title began in Moscow between Karpov and Kasparov; it was the most remarkable competition in the history of chess. The match was scheduled to last until one player won six games. After 27 games, Karpov led 5-0. From that point on, Garry resembled Indiana Jones who has fallen off a cliff but has managed to latch onto some bramble at the very last moment. It does not look like this bramble will be able to hold up the candidate for the world championship for long. But... 21 more games pass. The score is now 5-3.

Karpov is clearly worn out. So Karpov's great political machine springs into action. The plan is to interrupt the match for three months and then let the rested rivals finish it. At what level of the Soviet bureaucracy this plan ran aground, I don't know. The match is interrupted. At the concluding press conference, FIDE president Florencio Campomanes declares the match "unfinished" and suddenly announces a new match in one year's time, with the score at 0-0. Of course, this is a flagrant violation of the rules. But one that is acceptable, it seems, to both sides.

Suddenly, Kasparov rises – he has been sitting in the back of the hall during the press conference – and approaches the stage. "I protest," he declares. Kasparov

refuses to play the political games of the Soviet government. It seems that this is not a protest against an infringement of his rights. After all, Karpov's two-point lead melts away under the new arrangement. This is a protest against the omnipotence of the Soviet system, which can apparently appoint this or that champion at will, and which can also destroy a chess player. This is not a request: "Pick me!" – but a refusal to grant the Soviet government power over oneself.

The Kasparov whom we know today, the rebel and dissident, is born. The candidate for the new party favorite recedes into the past.

In the greater scheme of things, this moment became the end of Karpov's tenure as champion. Karpov had gotten used to winning within the framework of the Soviet system. Kasparov, at that memorable press conference, left the Soviet system.

Karpov tried to prove that he had still been capable of playing at the moment when the match was stopped. A week after the memorable press conference, Karpov traveled to Sweden to play for the Soviet team in the European Team Chess Championship. Not winning a single game in the competition, Karpov proved nothing to anyone. In November 1985, in a new match, Karpov would lose the title of world champion.

During the first match between Karpov and Kasparov, I had an encounter with the authorities that revealed to me something interesting about the psychology of the KGB's interactions with the ordinary citizens of the country. One day, I met a refusenik from a "split-up family," the chess master Volodya Pimenov. He was not being allowed to emigrate to Denmark to join his Danish wife. Volodya told me that he had met an American reporter at the match, and that this reporter had expressed a desire to meet with me.

“So bring him to our place,” I suggested.

“No, your apartment is bugged and under surveillance by the KGB,” Volodya said. “I don’t want to be spotted there.”

We had to make an appointment to meet on the street. We met on a frosty December morning near some building entrance on Prospect Mira. The American reporter turned out to be Fred Waitzkin, who had come to Moscow with his eight-year-old son, Joshua, and Joshua’s coach, Bruce Pandolfini, to show them the match for the world championship. That year, Joshua had won the US championship in his age group and was considered a prodigy.

We stood for a while near the building entrance. Moscow was not a city where you could take people to a cafe or some other public place.

I heard the following chess-related anecdote from Gennadi Sosonko. The Dutch grandmaster Hans Ree and the international master Karl Lehman from West Berlin came to Kiev in the autumn of 1978 to play in an international tournament. On their first night in town, they came down to the lobby of the Slavutich Hotel, where they were staying, and asked the doorman where they could go to have a good time. “That information costs money,” the doorman told them, and, having received four West German marks, disclosed the following secret to the two foreigners: “In Kiev, there’s nowhere to go in the evening.”

Moscow, at that time, was no better than the Ukrainian capitol in this respect even during the day, and I suggested to Pimenov:

“Maybe we could go to our place after all?”

“Fine. But I’ll park my car on a different street, and we’ll enter your building unnoticed,” Volodya agreed.

From a parallel street, we walked to our building through courtyards, between frozen laundry hung out to dry on special poles. Those who are interested in the time that we spent that day with Waitzkin and Pandolfini can read about it in Fred Waitzkin's excellent book *Searching for Bobby Fischer* and in his article, "Pawns No More," which came out at the end of 1984 in *New York* magazine and was entirely devoted to his visit with us. In the well-known movie based on Waitzkin's book, their trip to Moscow was unfortunately not shown.

The manuscript of Waitzkin's article, which was completed in Moscow, as well as the comments to my games that I dictated that day to Pandolfini for an American chess magazine, had a better fate than the article that was hidden away in Larry Christiansen's dirty laundry. As he recounts in his book, Waitzkin went to the American embassy, which was located on Chaykovsky Street in those days, and told the consul that he wished to send his manuscript the United States by diplomatic mail. "Impossible," said the consul, pointing with his finger at the walls, which had ears, and then using the same finger to point at his desk drawer, into which the manuscript had to be placed.

Just a little time passed, about three weeks, and I was summoned for a conversation with the deputy head of the Sports Committee, Rusak. Such an important government figure as the head of the Sports Committee naturally had other deputies besides Gavrilin.

"It has become known to us that you met with an American reporter. And we are not pleased," Rusak began, rather austerely.

Thinking that he had invited me to tell me that they had decided to release us, I couldn't figure out at first what reporter the deputy minister of sports was talking about. As I wrote above, we often met with Western reporters stationed in Moscow. Then I understood. Since I'd attempted to slip into our building unnoticed with my American guests, the KGB decided that I'd begun to fear

them. And if a person was afraid, then it was necessary to frighten him. Therefore, I answered rather rudely: where did he, Rusak, get the idea that I cared whether they were pleased or not pleased by anything about my actions?

Realizing that there had been a misunderstanding in his agency, Rusak switched to a second line of attack: they didn't like what I told the American reporter and what ended up in an article in *New York* magazine. Such a magazine was not familiar to me.

"Maybe that's the *New York Times Magazine*?" I asked.

"No, no. It's *New York*," answered the deputy minister, pointing to something that was lying on his desk.

I think that it was a translation of Waitzkin's article. Rusak didn't look like a man who could read English.

"Show me the article and we can discuss it," I suggested. I was curious to see this *New York* magazine, which was unfamiliar to me.

"No, that's impossible," Rusak cut me off.

"But if I can't see the magazine, there's nothing to discuss. After all, I don't know what's in this article," I closed the topic of my interview with Waitzkin.

At this point, the deputy minister remembered that his assignment was to scare me.

"If you keep acting that way," he returned to the point of the conversation, "we will send you very far away."

"That's what I'm trying to accomplish – to get very far away from you," I agreed unexpectedly, neutralizing his threat.

“But we’ll send you in a different direction.”

Rusakov got the last word.

In March 1985, Chernenko died and Mikhail Gorbachev became general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. This one was decidedly alive – a big change from the three half-corpses who had reigned before him. Somewhat alarming, however, was a sentence uttered by Soviet foreign minister Gromyko, who introduced Gorbachev to his friends in the Soviet government by saying that Gorbachev had a nice smile, but iron teeth. Gorbachev’s teeth turned out to be not so iron after all.

Our years as refuseniks were a remarkable time when global events taking place in our country and the rest of the world had a direct impact on our private lives. The Soviet government sent troops to Afghanistan, relations with America broke down, and the loophole of Jewish emigration almost closed. A new general secretary appeared, one who was not staring into the grave, but looking forward, at life, and hope appeared again.

On top of everything, in November 1985 Karpov lost the world championship title, and the tentacles with which he had squeezed the world of chess in the USSR had become weaker.

10. Storming the Castle

At the beginning of the winter of 1985, I found out – I think, from a broadcast on some Western radio station – that on April 16, 1986, in Bern, during a session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, a chess tournament was scheduled to take place under the rubric “Salute to Gulko.” The organizers of this event were the prominent human rights defender Vladimir Bukovsky; Lev Alburt, who had won two US championships in 1984 and 1985; and Edward

Lozansky, whom I had known a little during my student years. Edward had once been the schoolteacher of Natasha Vlasova, my classmate at the psychology department at MSU; they had remained friends and he often came to our student parties. Later, after Edward emigrated, his wife, Tanya, and their daughter, also Tanya, were held back in Moscow. Edward's wife was the daughter of some important Soviet general. In 1985, she and I signed collective appeals to the West about the refuseniks' situation. More recently, Edward had become politically active in Washington D.C., and shortly before the events described here, he had liberated his family.

Later, the organizers of the event were joined by the young grandmaster Maxim Dlugy, who was the World Junior Chess Champion. Maxim had been born in Moscow and grew up in New York.

The publicity that we received from the event in Bern gave us a relative degree of protection, and we decided to take extreme measures. We had seen that the Soviet government easily tolerated our hunger strikes. They had tolerated an isolated street demonstration in 1982. We decided to start coming out daily and demonstrating on one of Moscow's squares for as long as it took for them to release us... or to put us in prison. This refusenik life, with its eternal waiting for something, had become completely unbearable to us.

We reasoned that the new head of state had so far bared his "iron teeth" only in his fight against Russia's national illness, epidemic drunkenness, launching a nationwide campaign against this main national pastime. Karpov, who had been involved in deciding our fate when we applied for permission to emigrate, had lost his world champion title and, apparently, some of his influence as well. Moreover, after seven years as refuseniks, the threat that we presented to Soviet state security on the chessboard had, of course, decreased. I was no longer 32, but 39...

And the most important thing that led us to demonstrate in public not in 1979 or 1980, but in 1986, was the spiritual path that we had covered over our seven years as refuseniks. Remember what the young expert in the different ways of writing the letter “lahmed” had taught us, that “it is not we who are chained to the wall, but the wall that is chained to us”? We had become free people. And we decided to act like free people.

Again, as before our first demonstration, we sent letters to all conceivable officials, notifying them that starting on April 10, 1986, we would begin conducting daily protest demonstrations on Arbatskaya Square in Moscow, near the Gogol monument, against the government’s refusal to give us permission to leave the USSR. On Saturdays, on the Jewish Shabbat, there would be no demonstrations. We asked the Moscow municipal government to give us official permission to demonstrate. We invited sports and chess organizations to come out and support us in our struggle for our legal rights. And we could have reminded the KGB to make sure that all of the aforementioned organizations inform on us in advance. But the KGB probably made sure of that even without our advice.

Of course, in all of this there was mockery aimed at that risible document, the Constitution of the USSR, which guaranteed us the freedom to demonstrate. But if the citizens of the USSR had had a right to public protest, they would have been free citizens. And this would have no longer been the Soviet Union.

In order to get more publicity for the upcoming demonstrations, I decided to organize a collective, ten-day hunger strike to coincide with the 17th, and as it later turned out, penultimate, congress of the CPSU in late February-early March 1986. I proposed the idea to the old refusenik Natasha Khasina. The idea was received enthusiastically. On February 24, on the eve of the start of the congress, we held a press conference. In addition to me, another young man and six or seven women took part in the hunger strike. This time, we decided not to torture

Anya with another hunger strike.

A pleasant surprise was the presence of two groups of Western television reporters at our press conference. The KGB had not blocked entry to the apartment in which we had gathered. Although it could have...

Some kind of change was in the air...

In terms of my physical condition, the three hungers strikes in which I participated were noticeably different from one another. During this, last hunger strike, I felt horrible on the fifth and sixth days and wonderful on the ninth and tenth days. I didn't even want to stop fasting, but we had announced that the hunger strike would last only until the end of the congress.

Our concluding press conference was again attended by Western television reporters. They could have furnished evidence that the female refuseniks who had gone on the hunger strike with me had become noticeably prettier. Not only had their figures and the color of their faces improved. The ladies now all had a twinkle in their eyes. I surmised that it was a hungry twinkle.

Meanwhile, April 10 was rapidly approaching – the scheduled day of our first demonstration. I still had hopes that the government would let us go before this date. Indeed, what did they need our demonstrations for? They could have put us in prison many times even before this. To release us as a result of the demonstrations would be a humiliation for them and a bad example for other people. Without a doubt, if I could have talked to the people who controlled our lives, I would have convinced them to let us go at once. The horror of our situation consisted in the fact that our fates were decided not by people, but by phantoms. The KGB, the Communist Party – who was that? Who, concretely, was our jailer?

On the evening of April 9, we were visited by a friend, an old refusenik. She said

that she had spoken with knowledgeable people, Americans, reporters, and that we could not go through with the demonstration. They would break our arms and legs, put us in prison. But we were already filled with the fighting spirit and were yearning for battle.

On the following morning, we tried to repeat our maneuver of 1982. We left our apartment at five in the morning. There was a thick fog. You could see nothing beyond a one-meter radius. And yet, as we walked away from our building, two other figures kept constantly penetrating into these two tiny circles. We circled our building twice and understood that we could not break away from our pursuers. Well then, we told ourselves, next time we'll know: you can't play the same trick on them twice. We came back to our apartment and got the rest of our sleep.

At three in the afternoon, three teams of Western television reporters were waiting for us beside the Gogol monument. They, apparently, were interested in one question: would Gorbachev allow a protest demonstration in Moscow? At five minutes to three, Anya and I came out of the Arbatskaya-Koltsevaya metro station and proceeded to the location of the demonstration. It seemed to me that, from far away, I could already see people waiting for us by the monument. But all of a sudden, near the Khudozhestvenny movie theater, we were surrounded by a large group of men and a burly police major asked us to show our documents. "It turned out" that Anya and I were the spitting images of two criminals that they had been looking for, and that we had to go with them to the police station to be identified. We got into a wearisome argument, but it was clear that they would not let us proceed to the monument.

Then I noticed a small, fidgety man who was moving around the crowd that had surrounded us and giving orders to the people blocking our way. Pointing at him with a broad gesture, I suddenly shouted: "This man is from the KGB!" Something unexpected happened: the small man at whom I had pointed took to

his heels.

This taught us something extremely important. The KGB agents were all-powerful. As experience had shown, they could do whatever they wanted with the citizens of the country. But there were certain rules that they, too, had to obey. Thus, their membership in the “organization” could not be revealed in public.

After prolonged bickering, we finally trudged with our abductors to the police car. We spent the next nine hours inside a police station. But twice after we had been arrested we were moved to new precincts. By law, they had a right to detain us without showing cause for only three hours. They circumvented this law by officially starting a new detention every three hours. This game with *ex post facto* rules was interesting to us – it was something to think about.

Kuleshov, the previously mentioned KGB colonel, showed up at the third police precinct that we visited on that day, which was located somewhere on Presnya Street, to talk to us. He informed us that he had with him a message from the head of the Sports Committee of the USSR, Comrade Gramov.

I wasn’t interested in this message, but I asked Kuleshov to convey a message back to Gramov: “we will continue to demonstrate until we are released.”

The results of the first day of our campaign were mixed. On the one hand, they hadn’t put us in prison. Probably, they weren’t yet authorized to do so. But they didn’t let us stage a demonstration either. It appeared that the KGB was prepared to seize us daily on the way to the Gogol monument. It was necessary to look for a new move.

On the following day, we were arrested closer to home, at the entrance to the Schukinskaya metro station. But now we didn’t hesitate. We started screaming immediately. I shouted: “You’re from the KGB! You’re grabbing me, the famous

grandmaster Boris Gulko, because I want to stage a protest demonstration, because they're not letting us go to Israel!" What Anya shouted I didn't hear, since I was shouting very loudly. It seemed to me that the KGB agents were initially taken aback, not having expected such a reaction. But their stupefaction did not last long. They twisted us up and dragged us to a police room, which was conveniently located behind the ticket booths at the metro station. I, naturally, didn't see the person who was dragging me, but I saw the KGB agent who was dragging Anya. He had the eyes of a killer, filled with hatred.

By that time we had begun to recognize the KGB agents who were working with us. We gave many of them nicknames. This one, who was dragging Anya, was called simply Killer. Others included Marlon Brando, a handsome man who wore a wide-brimmed hat, and Housewife, a woman who carried a shopping bag with her.

Usually, whenever we left the house, we would be tailed by two teams from the Lubyanka. Each team consisted of four people: one gorilla, such as the aforementioned Killer, who was capable of killing an average person with one blow; two clever-looking little men, who today probably own banks; and the driver of the car. The most remarkable thing about these teams were the cars in which they followed us around: they had no license plates! Have you ever seen cars without license plates driving around Moscow?

One possible explanation comes to mind: they gave their means of transportation such a strange appearance in order to scare us. A car without license plates can run you over – and no one will know who ran you over. You can be shoved inside such a car and taken away – and no one will know where they have taken you.

But, I think, another explanation is more correct. About two months before our campaign, the physicist Armen Khachaturyan, who had become a refusenik at

the same time as we did, in 1979, had conducted a successful campaign to free his family. Armen and his son staged a hunger strike to coincide with a physicists' congress in Moscow. They also took part in the congress. Of course, the KGB was always on their back. At a certain point, Khachaturyan wrote a complaint against the KGB to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and listed the license plate numbers of the KGB cars that constantly followed them.

This was a typical Soviet joke – to complain to the party about the KGB. Even so, after this the KGB agents might have removed their license plates, so that the numbers on them could not be written down.

Of course, the explanation is a stupid one. But is driving around Moscow without license plates much smarter?

What I couldn't understand was why the police didn't stop them. Apparently, their cars had some other kinds of identifying marks.

Starting on the second day of our demonstrations, the arrests became routine. We would be kept in a police station for exactly three hours and then released. We started bringing a bag with a backgammon set with us to the demonstrations. Once in the police station, we would immediately take out the board and start playing.

The third day after the start of our campaign was a Saturday, a holiday for Jews, and we rested. On April 13, we were expecting our opponents to make a new move. I estimated that if the embarrassing scene at the entrance to the Schukinskaya metro station had been seen by two hundred people, and if each of them told twenty friends what he had seen, and if each of those friends... It was unlikely that the Soviet government would allow a man to keep shouting day after day in the middle of Moscow that he was a "famous grandmaster" and to

keep exposing the secret KGB agents who were abducting him.

Of course, as far as my fame went, I was greatly exaggerating. The only time I ever noticed that I was famous in Moscow was on the day after my return from winning the USSR championship. Taking public transportation around the city, I discovered at a certain point that I had run out of change and decided to go one trolleybus stop without paying. The driver stopped the vehicle in the middle of the street, demanded to see my ticket, and giving me back change from the fine that I then paid him, said: “The next time you come back from the USSR championship in Leningrad, you’ll buy a ticket.”

And so, at five minutes to three, on Sunday, April 13, we emerged from the Arbatskaya metro station and headed toward the Gogol monument. Suddenly, I became aware that there was no one around us. We were being allowed to reach our destination and to unroll our poster. What did this mean? Of course, not a decision to let us go. They would have done that before the demonstration. A decision to put us in prison?

This was the most frightening moment in our campaign. I found out where fear is located in the body. Somewhere at the bottom of the stomach. Like a cold, unpleasant weight.

And so, we are at the monument. We unroll our poster: “Let us go to Israel.” A KGB agent who has been waiting for us tears it up. And that is all. The demonstration is over. This was one of the two days in our campaign when we weren’t even arrested.

I felt a great sense of relief. It was not just that we were returning home free. It was becoming clear that we were winning the campaign. If they didn’t put us in prison now, to put us in prison tomorrow would be less logical. Apparently, my sense that victory was possible came from my experience as a chess player – my

understanding of the dynamics of a fight.

Or perhaps everything had to do with a linguistic difference between the ways in which the KGB and I defined the notion of a “demonstration.” Apparently, they believed that if we didn’t even display our poster for three seconds, then this wasn’t a demonstration at all. We, on the other hand, believed that yes, indeed, it was a demonstration. In order to hammer in our understanding of the term, we headed for the first working payphone, I took out a hidden piece of paper with the phone numbers of reporters of Western news agencies whom I knew, and I let the whole world know that today, on April 13, we had conducted a protest demonstration. Let the KGB now call the same numbers and explain that it wasn’t a demonstration.

Of course, the miracle of our non-arrest following the demonstration, apparently, the first such weakness shown by the regime since the Trotskyites’ demonstration on November 7, 1927, did not have merely a linguistic explanation. After leaving the Soviet Union, I learned how broad the support for us had been in different countries. On his way to Bern to attend the “Salute to Gulko” tournament, U.S. champion Lev Alburt stopped in London, where he played a match against UK champion Jonathan Speelman. Alburt’s second at this match, the Amsterdam grandmaster Gennadi Sosonko, told me later that the participants of the match and their seconds had visited a demonstration for Anya’s and my release, organized by an active London women’s group, the Committee of 35. The demonstration took place in Soho, in front of a theater in which the musical “Chess” was then being premiered. “There were as many portraits of you on that square,” Gennadi recounted, perhaps embellishing things just a little, “as there used to be portraits of Brezhnev on Red Square on November 7 in the old days.”

Alburt later read me a long list of American congressmen and senators who had taken steps to get us released. I saw American legislators’ interest in the

refuseniks when I participated in hearings on this issue in Congress at the beginning of August 1986, two months after we emigrated. During a simultaneous game session that I gave on that day at the capitol, one of my opponents was a representative of the American people who did not even know how the pieces moved. You had to be truly upset about Soviet Jewry to sit down and play a game of chess without even knowing the moves!

Of course, there were shows of support in Israel, too, although Israel did not have much influence on Soviet politics in those years. A day after we arrived in Israel on May 30, I attended a game of “live chess” between “refuseniks” and “the KGB” that was played by young people on the campus of the Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus in Jerusalem. The T-shirt of a boy who represented one of the pieces had my name on it. I presumed that I was supposed to be a pawn that had just turned into a queen.

And of course it was important that these were no longer the times of Brezhnev or Andropov, but the “early-Gorbachev” period. Andrei Sakharov was still languishing in forced residence in Gorky, but Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky had already been exchanged for a Soviet spy on Glienicke Bridge in Berlin. During our demonstrations, Vasily Barats had been arrested in Rovno and given a prison term, and a month later his wife, Galya, would be sent to prison as well, but certain signs of the coming liberalization were beginning to appear.

On the following day, April 14, the KGB apparently accepted our definition of a “demonstration” and detained us for three hours. We stuck to the policy that we had worked out by the second day: in response to all of the KGB agents’ orders, we said, “No!” After tearing up our poster, they still had to drag us to the car. From that day on, they did not drive us around to different police precincts, as they had on the first two days. They had settled on one, behind Old Arbat Street, across from the Vakhtangov Theater. After spending almost a month in this precinct, I became somehow used to it, and in later years, when I traveled to

Moscow for chess competitions, my feet themselves would sometimes take me to this precinct of their own accord.

In the following days of the week, we and the KGB worked out a familiar procedure: we would unroll our poster, they would tear it up. After some squabbling, we would be dragged to the car and taken to the police station. Once in the police station, we would take out our backgammon set and play for three hours until we were released. This helped us to reduce the tension following the battle, and in addition we wanted to make it clear that we were prepared for a long campaign and that sitting in their stupid police station did not worry us too much. When we left the police station, we would head to Staraya Square, to the reception room of the party's general secretary, and write another complaint to Gorbachev.

During the days of our demonstrations, there were many remarkable coincidences: Moscow is a big city, went we went around town we constantly ran into people we knew. And we only had to stop and say "How are you?" to the person when out of the blue a policeman would appear and request to see the person's identity papers.

Once, already on our way home, we bumped into our neighbor, the physicist Viktor Flerov, on a metro train. Viktor was proudly carrying a stack of freshly published books back from the printer's – his monograph. On the platform inside the Schukinskaya station, policemen were waiting for us. They escorted us and Flerov to the police room, which was already familiar to us, and took down passport information for all three of us. This arrest did not ruin Flerov's career in the Soviet Union, but after a while he and his family themselves emigrated to Israel.

But not all acquaintances whom I saw on the way to our demonstrations came up to us to say hello. During those days, I realized why the Kiev KGB so hated my

sister's husband, Volodya Kislik – he really was a wonderful organizer. By that time, Volodya and Bella had exchanged their apartment in Kiev for one in Moscow, and Volodya was now exasperating the Moscow KGB. He had organized things so that one or another refusenik would come to our building by two in the afternoon and accompany us at a distance to the scene of the demonstration. That way, if the KGB made us disappear, it would not be a disappearance without a trace. And when I glimpsed Boris Chernobylsky or Arik Rokhlenko in the crowd, I knew that these were not accidental encounters.

These were days of great inner tension. And this was the time when I began to feel support from Above. From somewhere, energy appeared; worn out by the tension, I suddenly found myself again full of strength. The religiosity to which I came later is based to a large extent on my spiritual experience of those days. Anya told me that she experienced something similar.

April 16 arrived – the day of our sixth demonstration and the day of the "Salute to Gulko" event in Bern. We decided to mark this day by holding a press conference. I called all of the reporters I knew, and all of them promised to come to our house. I set the time for 1 p.m., so that at 2:15 p.m. we would be able to leave for another demonstration.

The appointed hour arrived, but the reporters did not show up. A clear insight suddenly came to me: today the Americans had bombed Libya and all reporters were occupied with this piece of news and not leaving their press bureaus. I turned on the radio and the announcer confirmed it: yes, today the Americans had indeed bombed Libya. Surprised by this epiphany, not a very useful one, from a practical point of view, we went off to the demonstration.

Whenever there was an international crisis and everyone's attention was turned elsewhere, the KGB felt more free to take stronger measures. Thus, during the crisis that followed the occupation of Afghanistan, the KGB had exiled Andrei

Sakharov to Gorky. On such days an inconvenient foreigner could be expelled from the country. Therefore, during periods of crisis, Western diplomats and reporters tried not to leave their rooms and not to venture forth into the city.

Of course, on that day, the odds of them putting us in prison were also greater. Therefore, when we were released from the police station at the usual time, three hours after being detained, I felt a sense of relief. It was clear that if they were not going to use even a day like this one to arrest us, we were one step closer to victory.

We returned home, but at 8 p.m. we were supposed to go to the central telegraph to communicate with Bern. As I have already mentioned, we had no phone of our own.

When the time came for us to leave for the telegraph, I felt that I had no strength to move. I decided that the “Salute to Gulko” would take place just as well without me. Especially since they certainly wouldn’t connect us with Bern.

Volodya Pimenov went to the telegraph. As a chess master and refusenik, he too had been invited to take part in the event. After waiting for an hour, he left without getting a connection with Bern.

It was a very warm spring that year, and on April 21 it started pouring. When we reached Gogol, we discovered that there was not a soul to be seen – only Anya and I and about six KGB agents.

On that day, these boys made use of a new strategy. They started jumping around us and not letting us take our poster out of our bag. One of them handed me a little red book, immediately took it away again, and informed me that he was police officer Sokolov. He was lying; he was neither a police officer, nor, of course, Sokolov. Although I didn’t care either way. In short, on that day they didn’t let us unroll our poster and thus sabotaged our demonstration.

We had to look for a new move, and we found it. That evening, Anya sewed large white letters onto dark blue T-shirts. The text was unchanged: “Let us go to Israel.”

On the following day, arriving at the monument, we threw off our coats and thrust out our chests. Such a demonstration could not be stopped, and such a poster could not be torn. And while the policemen got themselves ready to shove us into their car and drive us away, a certain amount of time passed. Although not a great amount.

Muscovites’ reactions to our demonstrations were interesting, although it was not always easy to tell which reactions were spontaneous and which were not. Once, a drunk on a nearby bench kept watching us and shouting: “Kill them! Shoot them!” But when the policemen crowding around us failed to display sufficient zeal, not daring to drag us to the police car, this drunk went up to them and started giving them orders.

“Why is this drunk giving you orders?” I asked the police captain, the senior official among them, not without malice.

“Everything’s all right,” the officer assured me.

There were other reactions, too. An old man, who appeared to be sick, told me: “I salute you. I have to die here,” and with a sweeping gesture of the hand he pointed toward the small streets of the Arbat neighborhood. “But I salute you,” he said again, repeating this not entirely appropriate word. And I thought, for some reason, that this man must have some knowledge of the Gulag Archipelago that didn’t come from the book by Solzhenitsyn.

But the ones who filled me with a slight sense of horror were the old women. Their hatred was natural, or very well simulated. I, of course, didn’t rule out the

possibility that all of these old women were veterans of the secret police. But they could have also been the natural, foolish voice of the people. Like the old woman who was immortalized by Jan Hus.*

Our demonstrations were seen by our colleagues, too. The location that we had chosen for the demonstrations, the entrance to Gogolevsky Boulevard from Arbatskaya Square, was passed by everyone who went to or from the Central Chess Club. So both chess bureaucrats and grandmasters would walk by us. Once, already in early May, the grandmaster Zhenya Sveshnikov came to our defense. The police car that was supposed to take us away was late, and the policemen were waiting it. All of a sudden, Zhenya appeared. He was on his way to the club. He said hello to us and, finding out that we were being taken to the police station, told the policemen that he knew us and could assure them that we were famous chess players and decent people. Zhenya even told them that he was the coach of the Russian chess team and showed them his identity papers. We were dragged away anyway, but I was moved by Sveshnikov's actions.

In a mysterious way, the stand-off with the authorities that Sveshnikov, previously a law-abiding citizen, initiated near the Gogol monument continued with a series of court battles. They included an attempt to prove that the video movies confiscated from Zhenya after his first wife informed on him were not pornographic, but erotic; and a court battle against the city of Khimki, outside Moscow, which refused to give him a residence permit to live with his mother; and a court battle against the republic of Latvia, which would not grant Sveshnikov the right to live with his wife in Riga. What nonsense our strength of spirit is sometimes wasted on!

Meanwhile, April 24 had arrived, the beginning of the Jewish Passover, and we went on vacation, announcing a one-week break in our demonstrations. Passover, a holiday that commemorates the Jews' liberation from bondage in Egypt, had an additional meaning for the refuseniks. During the last three

thousand years, Jews have often been banished from different countries. But practically for the first time since the days of ancient Egypt, the Jews of the Soviet Union were not being allowed to leave. Therefore, Moses's words to Pharaoh – "Let my people go" – became almost the motto of the refusenik movement.

On the first two nights, Passover is celebrated over a meal. We spent the First Seder at Spaso House, the Moscow residence of U.S. ambassador Arthur Hartman. The hall in which we ate was described in Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita* as the location of the devil's ball. In the 1930s, the American ambassador spent sumptuous evenings here with birds and animals rented from the Moscow zoo. We celebrated the Second Seder at the apartment of an American reporter for a cable news channel – I didn't yet distinguish between these channels at the time – a man named Lurye. I was amazed at the time that his wife, Margaret, had gone to Helsinki before Passover to buy good fish in order to make the famous Jewish dish *gefilte fish*. She couldn't find what she wanted in stores in Moscow, not even the ones that accepted hard currency.

On the last days of Passover, the Chernobyl catastrophe occurred. Despite the heat in Moscow, we kept our windows closed. We were afraid of radioactive southern winds. Meanwhile, the idiotic Soviet media kept repeating that all talk of danger was an evil Western invention. On May 1, children were brought out for a demonstration on Kiev's contaminated streets. Before our departure from Moscow on May 30, we had refugees from Kiev stay in our apartment.

On May 2, we began our demonstrations again. I was surprised to discover that my sense of habit was gone, and during the demonstration on May 2, fear again returned to me in the form of a cold weight at the bottom of my stomach. Soon, however, the demonstrations once again turned into a routine.

The demonstration on May 5 stood out from the rest. At the time, a remarkable

ambassador from Malta was working in Moscow. His first name was Giuseppe and I never knew his last name. Giuseppe had a wife, a red-haired, green-eyed girl from Kiev named Zina. I never heard Zina's voice, but for some reason it seemed to me that the madness of Giuseppe's actions came from Zina. The ambassador was clearly asking for trouble.

At a certain point in our campaign, my friend Valery Soyfer asked Giuseppe whether it would be too much for him to come to our demonstration. "Nothing's too much," Giuseppe replied.

When on May 5 we arrived at the Gogol monument, Giuseppe and Zina were waiting for us. We took off our jackets and exhibited Anya's needlework. The ambassador of the Republic of Malta and his spouse approached us and engaged us in a diplomatic conversation. Soon, they left the site of the demonstration, while we continued demonstrating. For some reason, no one was arresting us. And then it became clear that there was absolutely nothing for us to do at our demonstration.

The public stared at us, we stared at the public. My friends, the grandmasters Misha Gurevich and Sasha Chernin, went by on their way to the chess club. We pretended not to recognize each other. The last thing they needed was a report to the KGB. Gurevich already held the record for being denied trips abroad. That year, he had been champion of the USSR, and he had not even been allowed to go with a Komsomol delegation to Mongolia.

Then we started to inspect the monument. Gogol, facing Arbatskaya Square, was one of the city's least loved monuments. Once, this location had been occupied by a wonderful statue of Gogol by Andreyev. But that Gogol had turned out to be too sad and talented for the optimistic and mediocre Stalin era, and in 1951 he was exiled to the courtyard of Count A. P. Tolstoy's house on Suvorovsky Boulevard, while a pompous monument by Tomsky was set up in his place. Even

the dedication on the pedestal was stupid: “To the great Russian man of letters from the Soviet government.” I told Anya that Gogol, who had so artistically described a Jewish pogrom in “Taras Bulba,” probably enjoyed watching the Jewish pogroms that took place here every day when policemen dragged us to a police car.

After hanging around for about twenty minutes, we went off to write another complaint to Gorbachev. I became seriously alarmed: what would we do if they stopped paying attention to our demonstrations?

I needn’t have worried. On the next day, we were again arrested.

For the Maltese ambassador, the consequences of his stunt were more serious. A month or two after he made his appearance at the Gogol monument, he was declared *persona non grata* and expelled from the Soviet Union. I met Giuseppe again in the spring of 1988 in Milan. He was sad – his diplomatic career in Malta was finished.

“No good deed goes unpunished,” I tried to console Giuseppe, somewhat clumsily.

It was becoming clear that the KGB had not received authorization to take serious actions against us. Petty provocations were another matter.

On that day, May 5, we came back home earlier than usual. Because of an intervention by the Republic of Malta, we did not spend the usual three hours in a police station.

In March 1985, following a complicated apartment exchange, my sister, Bella, and her husband, Volodya Kislik, had moved from Kiev to my parents’ apartment in Moscow’s Krylatskoye district, while my parents had ended up in a one-room apartment in a building not far from ours.

We went directly to our parents' apartment. Since the start of our demonstrations, we had not allowed our seven-year-old son, David, who had been a refusenik almost since the day of his birth, to go to school. Who knows what the KGB might have tried with the child? Nor did David himself especially miss his teacher, Tatyana Danilovna, who sometimes showed up in class drunk. When we went to our demonstrations, we dropped David off with my parents, and when we came back, we picked him up.

This time we entered my parents' apartment right after some uninvited guests. Alexander Kostyev, a Chess Directorate official and a children's coach – and who knows what else – had brought a World War II veteran from the Soviet War Veterans Committee to talk to my father, also a veteran of the war.

I took the uninvited guests to the kitchen and sent my parents to their room. My father was 79 years old, he was already not in very good shape, and of course I wanted to shield him from the KGB's provocations. As for my mother... I rather wanted to protect the veteran. During previous attempts to pressure my parents, KGB agents had heard from her everything that she thought about them. She attacked them fearlessly to defend her children.

However, the veteran ended up getting it from me as well. Arguing with a refusenik is not the same thing as fording the Dnieper or – whatever it was that he did during the war – manning a blocking unit and shooting at retreating Soviet soldiers. By the end of our conversation, the poor guy looked bad and I hope that Kostyev was able to bring him back without a heart seizure or a hypertensive crisis.

Of course, it was cruel of the KGB to send an old person on such an assignment, even if this man was a veteran of state security or a former political worker. I witnessed another failure to communicate between the KGB and World War II veterans much later, in December 2001.

At that time, I had come to Moscow to play in the world championship tournament. The competition took place on the sixth floor of the Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin. During one of the first days of the championship, the veterans of the famous Battle of Moscow celebrated its 60th anniversary on the first floor of the Palace of Congresses.

After the celebration, several old men went up to the sixth floor to watch us play. One of them went to the bathroom. Stationed inside the bathroom he found a KGB agent whose job it was to make sure that the bathroom was used only by people with papers identifying them as participants in the championship.

“You’re not allowed in here,” the KGB agent stopped the war veteran.

“But I have to piss,” objected the old man (he was over 80, as one could easily calculate).

“This bathroom is only for the participants of the championship,” the KGB agent repeated, defending the urinals.

“I defended Moscow,” the veteran proclaimed plaintively, pointing to the decorations hanging on his chest. To the torments of his bladder, evidently, a sense of injury had been added. Just a little while ago, on the first floor, he was told how much he was loved and appreciated, while here, on the sixth floor, he was not even allowed to take a leak.

“But I have a wife and a child. I’ll lose my job,” the defender of the urinals replied, also plaintively. And his argument had merit.

I wanted to yield my right to use the urinal to the veteran – I myself could have gone down to the first floor and used the bathroom for ordinary people. But I wasn’t sure whether such an exchange of rights was permitted by the Chekist law code.

During this entire time, from April 10 on, KGB agents were openly present in our lives. When we walked out of our building, we did not see them. But as soon as we walked away from our building or got on a bus for even one stop, our “escort” would appear beside us or a “familiar” KGB agent would enter the bus, while through the rear window we would see two cars without license plates following the bus. Once we emigrated, it took me a long time to lose the habit, whenever I got inside a car, of immediately turning around to see who was following us.

On Saturday, May 3, a day without a demonstration, we took our son for a boat ride in Serebryany Bor, one of the most pleasant parks in Moscow, not far from our house. Our rowboat was followed down the river by an “escort rowboat” from the KGB.

Later that day, we went to my sister’s house in Krylatskoye through the Troitse-Lykovsky woods. It would have taken over an hour to get to her house by public transportation; through the woods, you could walk there in 50 minutes. Two teams from the KGB trailed us, for some reason hiding behind trees, although, for technical reasons, they were without cars. “Who are those people?” our son asked in alarm. “Don’t worry, those are KGB agents,” I told him. “They’re protecting us.”

They “protected” us around-the-clock. Once, late in the evening, we decided to send someone a telegram and I went to the post office, which was located not far from our house and was open 24 hours a day. By the telegram window, I saw Marlon Brando sitting on a chair, the handsome KGB agent whom I, apparently because of his appearance, considered to be the leader of one of the groups. Whether they were listening to what went on in our apartment and knew that I would come to send a telegram, or whether he had simply sat down at the post office for a rest, I don’t know.

I had no bad feelings toward these boys. It was work like any other. An enormous number of people in the USSR did things that were a lot worse – ideological workers, weapons manufacturers, the “heroes” of the Soviet army who were giving their lives in Afghanistan in those years to expand the “Evil Empire” to the south.

Of course, it is easy to start hating people who every day drag you to the police station and spy on you. But I believed that we should maintain an impersonal attitude toward them. “We’re at war not with the lieutenants, but with the generals,” I kept telling myself and Anya. Gradually, we got used to them. And they got used to us. And started to trust us. But they shouldn’t have.

11. Breakthrough

On May 6, after spending the requisite three hours in a police station following a demonstration and getting our fill of backgammon, a game at which Anya beat me mercilessly, we headed to Staraya Square, as we always did, to write a letter of complaint to Gorbachev. The text was already worked out. Our spooks were waiting for us at a distance. On that day, we were being tailed by Housewife, the woman with the shopping bag, and two young men, who stood somewhat farther away and formed kind of a second echelon.

When we left the Central Committee’s reception hall, Housewife had fallen behind us for a second. “Let’s run!” Anya commanded. There was nothing more to this impulse than exasperation at having someone follow you around all the time.

We ran off. In those years, we were good sprinters. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the KGB agents running, too, at a considerable distance from us. Rushing into the underground passageway on Nogina Square, we did not turn left, toward the crowd at the entrance to the metro, but came out on the other side of the

passageway and slipped inside the entrance of the nearest building. This was the reception hall of the first secretary of the Moscow municipal committee of the Communist Party, Boris Yeltsin.

We spent a long time writing him a letter, caught our breath and relaxed. When a half-hour later we emerged from the building, no one was waiting for us outside.

We headed to Kotelnicheskaya Embankment, away from the metro station, where they might still have been looking for us. It was an amazing feeling – to have no one following us. In order to experience it, you have to have the KGB's eyes on you for a whole month. Such unprecedented freedom demanded some kind of action.

We had been noticing that some refuseniks, who, during of first demonstrations would appear briefly in the crowd of passersby in order to see what was going on with us, had recently become bolder and were standing across the street from the monument in a small group, watching our battles. By the look on their faces, I could see that they were on the verge of joining us. Everyone hated being a refusenik, a condition that ate up years of people's lives.

We decided to visit someone among the refuseniks whom we knew and to invite them to participate in our demonstration. Plans had to be made in secret; otherwise, the person might be snatched up on his way to the demonstration, just as we had been snatched up during the first two days of our campaign.

Our choice fell on two people who had become refuseniks at the same time we did, in 1979, the biologists Volodya Apekin and Katya Skazkina. They, together with their daughter, a gifted ceramics artist also named Katya, seemed to us to be more decisive people than most of our other acquaintances. In addition, Volodya was in a desperate situation. He needed a heart operation, and this operation had to be performed, naturally, somewhere other than the Soviet Union. I had heard

from someone that Volodya was also in danger of having his leg amputated.

We headed to the Apekins', who lived on Ryazansky Prospect. Naturally, they weren't home. After traipsing around Ryazansky Prospect for an hour and a half – a repulsively ugly place, like most of the new neighborhoods that were going up around Moscow during that period – we finally saw them arrive.

Drinking tea in their kitchen, I told them about our campaign.

"It appears that the KGB did not get authorization to put us in prison. If you demonstrate with us, you might be protected by this lack of an authorization. On the other hand, they can't allow the demonstration to grow. There's a significant probability that they'll simply let us go."

A tense silence hung over the table. For about twenty seconds. Maybe for half a minute.

"Why not?" Volodya said. "I'll do it."

We talked over all the details and went home.

On the following day, Volodya Apekin was waiting for us on a bench by the Gogol monument. And it had to happen that we were late. Two or three minutes late. These minutes, Volodya later told me, were the scariest minutes of his life. Finally, with enormous relief, he saw us crossing the square and walking toward the monument.

Leaning on a cane, Apekin rose from the bench by the monument and came toward us. We got in a row and took off our jackets. On Volodya's chest, on a blue T-shirt, were the words: "Let us go to Israel."

I sensed, or perhaps I imagined, confusion among the KGB agents who were waiting for us. Without a doubt, telephones were already ringing in offices in the

Lubyanka, and maybe on Staraya Square as well. Finally, we were approached by policemen and told to walk to the police car. Leaning on his cane, Volodya began hobbling toward the car.

“We won’t go,” Anya and I said, as we always did.

“I won’t go, either,” Volodya changed his mind and rejoined our ranks.

One must give the policemen their due: they carried Apekin very carefully.

On that day, we spent longer than usual at the police station. A discussion was going on somewhere, somebody was getting a dressing-down. Finally, men from the KGB appeared and ordered us to remove our insurrectionary T-shirts. Volodya began to unbutton his jacket.

“We won’t take them off,” Anya and I said.

“I won’t take mine off, either,” Apekin joined us, buttoning up his jacket again.

When two people hold you down while a third takes off your T-shirt, there’s little you can do. Volodya and I submitted to the inevitable. But not Anya. She kept breaking free and resisting. “Now you’ll see which of us is the bad one,” I thought, maliciously. Or maybe Anya, who had put so much effort into sewing on the letters, was just upset to see her work destroyed...

After being released, Volodya went home, while Anya and I headed to the payphone from which I always called reporters after our demonstrations. That payphone was snuggled up against the side of the Soviet foreign affairs ministry on Smolenskaya Square, and by contrast with most of Moscow’s payphones, it was always in good working order. I think that it was permanently wiretapped as well. Although so were the telephones of the Western reporters whom I would call.

I told the reporters the story of Apekin, who had joined us, and promised that on May 11, when a massive demonstration in support of Soviet Jews-refuseniks was supposed to take place in New York, we in Moscow would also bring out a group of people to demonstrate.

From my end, this declaration was not entirely a bluff. I sensed that there were refuseniks who were ready to join us.

That evening, when we were at home, a policeman brought us a summons to come to the Visa Registration Office on the following day, Thursday, May 8, at four in the afternoon. Evidently, they wanted to sabotage our demonstration, which was scheduled for three.

We went to the Visa Registration Office in the morning. Inspector Sazonova, well known to all of Moscow's refuseniks, received us immediately. Actually, we split up. I went into the office, while Anya remained waiting outside.

Sazonova told me to take the necessary forms home and fill them out again, since the old ones, filled out seven years ago, were out of date. I replied: "What's the use of filling out forms for nothing? Why don't you tell me, instead, whether they intend to let us go." Sazonova said something unintelligible in response. I insisted. Finally, Sazonova said: "Fill out the forms, bring them back, and you'll get a postcard."

The term "postcard" was used to refer to the document that indicated that one had permission to leave and specified what steps had to be taken in order to obtain an exit visa. This looked like victory.

I left the office. Outside, Anya told me that, listening to our argument from outside, she had distinctly heard Sazonova shouting over and over: "You've been given permission," while I kept objecting again and again. This means that my ears refused to take in the words that I had been waiting for in vain for seven

long years. My consciousness would not accept them.

I called Apekin and told him that there would be no more demonstrations for us – we were being released. Volodya replied that he would think about what to do next.

I felt somewhat uneasy about the Apekins. We had made use of Volodya's courage and were now abandoning him.

On the following morning, my mother came over and told us that Apekin had called her and had asked for me to call him back. I went to my parents' apartment. Since my father was a war veteran, he had been given a telephone; since he was the father of a dissident, this telephone had been wiretapped. That was exactly what Apekin was counting on.

"I'll write an open letter to the Pugwash Conference," Volodya said, sending threats to the KGB through my parents' telephone. "I'll write to some other organizations."

"Hmm," I muttered, disappointedly. "A lot of good the Pugwash Conference will do him."

Two hours later, my mother came over to our house again. Apekin had asked for me to call him once more. I already had a hunch as to what I would hear.

"I've decided to continue demonstrating by myself," I heard his voice at the other end of the line.

"That's more like it," I said, supportively.

I had a hunch that the Lubyanka had received a talking-to from Staraya Square, and that the KGB had to put an end to our demonstrations immediately. Even so, to come out and demonstrate alone, without the relative protection that we had

thanks to our chess fame, was not, I realized, an easy decision.

Thankfully, Apekin's threat, passed on through my parents' telephone, worked. Several hours before the demonstration, which Volodya's daughter, Katya, had also decided to participate in, a policeman brought the Apekins a postcard with permission to leave the Soviet Union. In America, Volodya had a successful heart operation. To this day, twenty-one years later, he continues doing successful scientific work at MIT.

For one week, we filled out forms and obtained various supplementary documents, and on May 15, exactly seven years after we first filed our papers, we came back to Kolpachny Lane, so well known to Moscow's Jews, and handed our papers to Sazonova.

"Everything's fine," she told us. "You can go."

"But where's the postcard?!"

"Now they need their postcard this very minute!" the Visa Registration Office inspector said, ironically. "Wait. It'll come in the mail."

"We've already waited seven years."

"You'll wait some more."

With heavy hearts, we descended from Kolpachny Lane to Staraya Square. We had hoped that our battle was over. Apparently, it wasn't.

We went into some museum, which was located inside an old church hidden among the heavy buildings of the enormous complex of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Gradually, we came to a decision.

I dialed the numbers of several refusenik-friends, whose telephones I knew I

could rely on: the KGB listened in on them twenty-four hours a day. “They lied to us,” I told them. “Tomorrow, we’re going to demonstrate again.”

When we reached Strogino, a policeman was already waiting for us in our apartment with a postcard that said: bring such-and-such documents and you’ll get an exit visa.

We had demonstrated something seemingly incredible. It was possible, in the Soviet Union, to stage a protest demonstration against the actions of the government and have a greater than zero chance of getting what one wanted and not ending up in prison.

When we were already collecting the documents we needed to leave, I brought together Boris Chernobylsky, a refusenik who had come back from prison a year earlier, with Western journalists. Boris was already planning a new demonstration. Shortly after that, he brought out his family, his wife and three children, to the Bolshoi Theater. The five of them unrolled a sign that said: “The Chernobylskys – to Israel.”

By contrast with us, the Chernobylskys had not warned the authorities about their actions in advance and had caught the KGB off guard. The event took place three weeks after the Chernobyl catastrophe, and at first the KGB agents – the center of Moscow was swarming with them in those days – could not comprehend the meaning of these strange words. They even sounded somewhat anti-Israeli. Maybe, they even contained some suggestion that the Chernobyl nuclear reactor had been blown up by Jews. In that case, such a demonstration might have been permitted.

Only after twelve minutes were the Chernobylskys muzzled up. The KGB agents were furious at the fact that the sign was written not on paper, as our signs had been at the beginning of our campaign, but on a plastic tablecloth. It was

impossible to tear it up.

Boris was sentenced to 15 days in jail. But the dam had burst. After some time, there was news of a demonstration by a refusenik somewhere in the provinces.

Nine months later, in early February 1987, I flew from the United States to a chess tournament in Paris. When I reached the hotel, I immediately turned on the news on television, out of habit. There was a report about a demonstration by refuseniks in Moscow who were demanding the release of Iosif Begun, a refusenik who had served a seven-year sentence for anti-Soviet propaganda. Several women refuseniks – most of the demonstrators were women – had been cruelly beaten by the KGB. A Western television camera man's camera had been smashed. Yet soon, in the very same month of February, Begun was released.

This was already a different level of protest. They were fighting for another's rights. And they were winning.

In November 1987, flipping the channels in our Boston apartment from one news program to another, I saw on all of them my sister, Bella, arguing with KGB agents during a big demonstration of refuseniks on Smolenskaya Square in front of the Soviet foreign ministry. The geography of Jewish demonstrations in Moscow had expanded. Next to Bella, defending his camera from KGB agents, was the famous television reporter Peter Arnett. And since all of this was being filmed, it was clear that several other television reporters were working nearby.

Boris and Anna at a 1987 press conference, Harvard University

It is now clear that the KGB and the party had made a terrible mistake – in terms of their own interests – by creating in the USSR a community of refuseniks numbering in the many thousands. When the regime tried to modernize, these individuals, who were internally free by Soviet standards, fought for their rights and carried many other people along with them, in many respects facilitating the demise of the Soviet system.

The story of the refusenik Sergey Mkrtychyan is an interesting one. In the spring of 1988, following the example of our demonstration, he started demonstrating daily, along with his wife and baby son, near the Yuri Dolgoruky monument across from Moscow's city hall, demanding permission to emigrate. The government acted the way I had feared it might act during our demonstrations: it did not react. But Sergey continued demonstrating.

Gradually, others started joining him. But not refuseniks. People had a lot of grievances against the Soviet government. The demonstrations were becoming large-scale.

Finally, Sergey and his family left the USSR. Meanwhile, those who stayed behind had grasped the fact that one could fight against the government for one's rights.

Let me go back to our departure. The extreme tension of the preceding month and a half took its toll – on May 22, Anya started having unexplained severe pains in her stomach. We called my distant relative and our good friend Lenya Selya. Today, Leonid is a neurosurgeon near Washington D.C. and a professor at Georgetown University. At the time, he was working as an orthopedic surgeon in Botkinskaya Hospital. Lenya took Anya to his hospital and stayed with her all night while she was operated on. Who knows what kinds of things might have

occurred to the KGB when a person was in such a vulnerable position – with an opened stomach and under anesthesia?

On the following day, I came to check up on Anya. The room next to Anya's was decorated in marble. The room was a landmark. It was the room that Lenin had stayed in after the assassination attempt against him at the Mikhelson factory. And it occurred to me that the entire history of politically active Jewish women in Russia during the twentieth century stretched between these two rooms. From a passionate urge to change something in this country to a no less passionate desire to leave it.

On Monday, May 26, I brought all of the necessary papers to Sazonova.

"You must leave the USSR before Thursday, May 29," Sazonova said.

"Could we leave on Friday, instead?" I inquired, just in case.

Sazonova hesitated for a second and then said: "No."

As for me, I was thinking that even if she had said "yes," we would have still tried to leave on Thursday.

I found a taxi and went to pick up Anya. Despite the fact that doctors were advising her to remain in the hospital for three more days, we had to go home immediately. We needed to get visas at the Austrian and Dutch embassies – the Dutch embassy represented Israel in the Soviet Union – and to buy tickets.

After we were given permission to leave, when it might have seemed that the conflict had been resolved, the KGB's concern for our wellbeing did not diminish: the same two cars without license plates and the same two teams of KGB agents continued to follow us around. Moreover, apparently upset by their humiliating defeat, the agents became rude, pushing and threatening us.

Anya once joked: “There’s one possible scenario in which we’ll never leave. If they demand that we reimburse them for all their work with us, we’ll never be able to pay them back.” Of course, like everyone who left the Soviet Union in those days, we were relieved of 1300 rubles per person for renouncing our citizenship – about an average annual salary for each departing citizen. But this money covered only a small part of the KGB’s expenses.

Maybe because of this, when we were leaving they stole our chess library and all our chess medals at the customs desk. The books that they stole I had already read, for the most part, but to win those medals again was something that I never got a chance to do.

My sister, who spent two years longer in the USSR as a refusenik than we did, filed a complaint against the customs desk. She received a remarkable response from the head of the Moscow customs office, Svanidze: we had been stripped of our medals by a decision of the Chess Federation of the USSR.

I would have liked to have seen that decision. In the first place, it would have had to have been a decision not to “strip,” but to “rob” us of our medals, since our medals were not confiscated from us, but quietly removed from our luggage. What’s more, they took not only the medals that we had received from the Chess Federation of the USSR, for example, our USSR champions’ gold medals, but also two gold medals from FIDE which I won in 1966 and 1967 at the World Student Chess Championship, as part of the Soviet team. Of course, if one is stealing, rather than “stripping,” one can also steal things that one didn’t give out oneself.

After receiving Svanidze’s answer, Bella took the Chess Federation of the USSR to court. In those years, Bella became the main expert among the refuseniks on legally defending their rights against the government.

A trial took place, or rather, a trial was begun. Soon after the start of the proceedings, an unknown individual entered the courtroom and took the judge to a back room. The judge returned looking pale and announced his decision: the claim regarding the restitution of medals was not a proper subject for court discussion. I'd like to know in whose collections our medals are gathering dust today.

12. Freedom

The airplane from Moscow to Vienna, on which we left, was almost empty. In those days, few people received permission to emigrate. Pasha Timonin and his wife, two members of the Pentecostal sect, were the only ones flying with us. They had broken through by "fighting for peace." At that time, Jewish and non-Jewish refuseniks had created a farcical organization of "fighters for peace." The KGB was spending millions of dollars in those years to organize "peaceniks" in the West, who fought against American foreign policy. But it could not tolerate unorganized Soviet "peaceniks" within its own country. Especially since they could tell their Western "colleagues," when the latter visited the Soviet Union, that the USSR was not such a peace-loving state after all. Little by little, these Soviet "peaceniks" were being let go.

Pasha, who sat in front of me in the airplane, kept turning around and sharing his excited thoughts. In doing so, he constantly concealed his mouth with his hand. It was thought that the KGB could read lips at a distance. Who knows, maybe they could. I yelled to the former "peacenik:" "Pasha, take away your hand! We're free!" Pasha smiled self-consciously. "Yes, of course." But in a minute, his hand returned to his lips. What could you do? It was a habit of many years.

From the moment of our departure, that sense of freedom about which I yelled to Pasha became for a long time the dominant feeling in my life. I felt it constantly

with every part of my body, including my skin. Apparently, you have to want something desperately for seven years in order to really experience it once you obtain it.

About a year and a half after our departure from the USSR, I was playing in the American Open Tournament in Los Angeles. After the first day of the competition, I spent a night without sleep, tormented by a wisdom tooth. Filling up on Bayer aspirin, I played my morning game and then headed to the dentist to have that nasty, wise tooth pulled. That evening, as I was playing a game with a mouth filled with blood after the operation, I found myself thinking: “Has the feeling of freedom that I feel with my skin become less intense after my dental torments? No, it hasn’t!”

In 1990, toward the end of a tournament in Linares, I won a game against Garry Kasparov, bringing our personal score to 3-0. After the game, the famous Spanish chess reporter Leonxto Garcia, known among chess players as “Skull,” due to the complete absence of growth on his head, approached me with a microphone and asked a question to which he thought he could already predict the answer.

“What was the happiest moment of your life after your departure from the Soviet Union?”

“The happiest moment of my life,” I replied without hesitating for a second, “was the actual moment of my departure from the Soviet Union.”

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* *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers,* translated by Charles Taylor (Cambridge University Press, 1897), p. 29.

* O sancta simplicitas!” exclaimed Jan Hus, seeing an old woman adding sticks to the bonfire on which he was being burned.

Afterword

by Viktor Kortschnoi

It has been no easy task to come up with a title for these few pages, written as an afterword to this important book. But here is one possibility: “A monster horrid, hideous, huge, hundred-mouthed, and barking!” Actually, this is the epigraph to Radishchev’s book *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, intended to illustrate the horror of Russian autocracy in the late 18th century. Radishchev took this line from Trediakovsky’s *Telemachiad*. But as a description of the organization that rules Russia now, it will do.

As a history student at Leningrad State University, I took no interest in politics, despite the fact that I belonged to a group that was studying “international relations.” The members of the group had to learn several foreign languages: in addition to English, which was mandatory in all departments, we had to pass courses in Latin and French during our third year. Apparently, we were being groomed to become major scholars. Nonetheless, politics, domestic or international, was of absolutely no interest to me.

I did manage to pick up on some things that were happening around me. Toward May 9, when pardons for prisoners were handed out, grim, educated-looking people appeared in the trains... There were occasional conversations... I knew dozens, hundreds of jokes, including anti-Soviet jokes, but I drew no conclusions from them. The newspapers printed Andrey Vyshinsky and Yakov Malik's fiery speeches at the United Nations, but I don't recall ever reading a single line.

I was entering the world of chess and trying not to clutter my brain with extraneous junk. But there were some smart people in the world of chess. And they shared with me their thoughts, feelings, emotions. One grandmaster told me that politics in the Soviet Union was shaped by three forces: the party, the army, and the KGB. As a rule, all three worked together, but from time to time two of them united against the third. Thus, when Beria had to be removed (1953), the army united with the party; when it came time to remove Khrushchev (1964), the party united with the KGB.

Millions of people were in prisons and labor camps, but one could not read about this anywhere – censorship worked perfectly. Once, in the late 1960s, I was visited by a geologist. He made me a present of several awkward-looking, hand-carved chess pieces, and he told me the following story: A labor camp had been established in the Kolyma region. Several hundred prisoners were brought there, along with guards and enough food for a month. And then the authorities forgot about this camp. When after half-a-year geologists reached the site, they found only hundreds of skeletons and... chess pieces.

When I began to travel abroad, I immediately took note of the deputy head of our delegation, a KGB officer, our "translator." He was a person who was completely different from everyone else, with functions that were also radically different. "Pretty clever," I thought. "A little man, the 'translator,' makes his contribution to big politics!"

When in 1976 I left the USSR, I naturally began to pay special attention to the KGB's work abroad. To repeat, I was not well acquainted with the everyday work of the KGB within the USSR; *but my assessment of this organization's activities abroad was that its work was of the highest order.* The KGB *got high marks* for its operational activities in Europe and America from the governments of dozens of countries. Let's recall that the KGB tracked down and murdered former Soviet citizens in many independent countries. It was for this reason that, one day after I requested political asylum in the Netherlands, the Dutch government made a decision to provide a special police unit for my protection. It is for this reason that, during the whole following year, when I played in Europe, I was protected by the police in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom.

In its dubious activities around the world, Soviet intelligence relied on the help of pro-Communist sectors of the population, as well as the support of numerous immigrants. One should not forget that during the years of the so-called first wave of emigration alone (1917-1921), nine million people left Russia. Refugees from Russia's lawlessness settled down in every corner of the world. Incredibly, I met a Russian man in Cuba in 1963 who had fled from Lenin and Trotsky in 1920. Communism had caught up with this unfortunate runaway in Cuba...

To be sure, not all of the emigrants of the first, second, and third waves were ready to collaborate with Soviet security services. People who had left their homeland for political reasons did not, as a rule, bargain with their conscience. But there were many whose motives were less pure, who had emigrated for economic reasons, particularly among the more recent refugees. The KGB watched me and those I came in contact with. My naive attempts to pass letters to my family in Leningrad with Russian Jews living in West Germany failed twice...

The Soviet authorities had to know where I was in order to react to my actions in

a timely manner. After all, I was under a Soviet boycott, that is, Soviet grandmasters did not participate in tournaments with me. Apparently, I was surrounded by several informers; and Soviet intelligence was quite successful at dealing preventive blows. They had just one slip up. I came to a tournament in Lone Pine and the Soviet delegation showed up there as well. This happened because I had an apartment in Manhattan from where I was sometimes able to make trips that Soviet intelligence had no information about. But in Germany the KGB had a free hand and permitted itself to take aggressive actions against me. The chess master Yakov Estrin actively participated – and blew his cover – in one such operation by the KGB, in May 1978.

In Geneva in the early 1980s I became acquainted with and paid a visit to the home of an emigrant by the name of Dzerzhinsky, the grandson of the founder and leader of the Cheka, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, the predecessor of the KGB. I do not want to go into the history of the KGB here, but my impression is that the bloodthirsty, lawless Cheka was the midwife of the modern monstrosity that goes by the name of the FSB.

After the death of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the Cheka's founder, all of his kin were sent to Siberia, as was the rule in the Soviet Union. Later, they were given permission to emigrate. Initially, his grandson went to Israel; then he left Israel and settled down in Switzerland. From conversations with him and from his behavior, I realized that he was following in his grandfather's footsteps and working for Israeli and Soviet intelligence.

When I moved to Switzerland, the KGB became less active, staying more or less within diplomatic bounds. In the Soviet embassy, about half of the staff worked for intelligence. What concretely was the structure of the Russian embassy, how and in what manner were intelligence agents embedded in it? For instance, what position did Vladimir Putin occupy in Dresden? Or maybe I am wrong? After my defection, the entire staff of the Soviet embassy in The Hague was fired –

every last employee, from the ambassador down, about one hundred people in all. Does this mean that all of them were intelligence agents and that all of them were to blame for my defection?

In my autobiographical book, I relate how I moved into my own apartment in Wohlen, Switzerland and had a telephone line installed in it. My number was not yet listed in the telephone directory, but the first call I got was from the Soviet embassy – I was informed that I was being stripped of my Soviet citizenship. This was nothing special; my number was known to the police and it was not difficult to obtain it. But I realized that, in the presence of Soviet intelligence in Switzerland, my home was not by any means “my castle,” and I soon moved in with my wife, Petra.

This book does not say a great deal about the KGB’s work in Baguio (1978). Recall that in 1999, former KGB agent Mitrokhin fled to England. He brought with him records that he had kept on the job. They contain the following statement: “17 KGB officers have been sent to the Philippines to help Karpov secure victory against Kortschnoi.” If truth be told, I did not see them. There was only indirect evidence of their presence. Our group was protected by Philippine security. Certain items belonging to me disappeared, for example, a walkie-talkie, a Russian Bible... There were several uncommonly repulsive faces among Karpov’s so-called “official delegation,” among them Pishchenko, who is mentioned in this book, and who was, according to certain other sources, a matchless expert in handling guns.

From the very start, the KGB had difficulty tracking down the documents that were made out to Petra in Vorkuta where, thanks to the KGB, she had spent ten years. Leeuwerik was her married name, but she had been imprisoned in Vorkuta under her maiden name, Hajny. But since there is no h-sound in the Russian language, most German last names that have an “h” in them are transliterated with a “g” (for example, “Hitler” becomes “Gitler” in Russian). On one

occasion, the KGB slipped Petra a drink in order to take her fingerprints from her glass. In short, the main function of Soviet intelligence agents boiled down to making life difficult for us and, of course, protecting their own. In order to provide security for Zukhar, the parapsychologist, they had to exert themselves quite a bit. When my yogi fans appeared in the hall, they did not touch Zukhar. But he felt extremely uncomfortable in their presence. At the end of a month-long battle, the Soviets achieved something that seemed impossible: the yogis were banned from the premises thanks to the active support of the shameless Florencio Campomanes.

It was not long now until the end of the contest. By the end of the match, the security personnel did not conceal their hostility. The actions of Campomanes, the organizer of the match, toward me and my people were exceptionally rude. Mikhail Tal, who had been my comrade-in-arms for many years, but who was serving as Karpov's assistant during the match in Baguio, told me twelve years after the end of the tournament that had I won the match, I would have been physically destroyed, i.e., killed. According to him, everything had been prepared to this end. But it is absolutely clear that the KGB's instructions were to be carried out by people supervised by Campomanes and the dictator of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos.

As I have already said, after the end of this match I moved from Germany to Switzerland. My war with Karpov temporarily ended. But the KGB was still thinking up new traps for me. On two occasions, trips to Switzerland and Germany were organized for delegations headed by attractive women whom I had known in Moscow and Leningrad.

In my autobiographical book, I have already recounted how I was once invited by Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva. She believed that the KGB was watching her and was capable of instilling fear in her at a distance. Fearing an attack by KGB agents, she more than once changed her residence in the United

States. Rightly or not, I considered it my duty to try to dissuade her of her apprehensions. Svetlana did not like this and we did not meet again. In actual fact, I believe that the KGB does have such powers.

Unfortunately, this book contains very little information about the KGB's activities during my match against Karpov in Merano in 1981. It seemed that everything that Soviet intelligence had in its arsenal by September 1981, all technological, chemical, psychological methods of influence, were put into effect at that time in order to put pressure on me, the members of my group, and even a few of my more prominent fans. Let's not forget that Karpov's group, which came from Moscow, contained 43 people, who were joined by more people from the Soviet embassy in Rome. All told, there were about 70 of them.

As the reader may have gathered from the first page of my essay, the KGB shared its influence and power in the country with two other powerful organs. Tensions and squabbles within the KGB did exist, of course, and were, evidently, a regular occurrence, but they did not have much of an effect on its general policies. At the beginning of 1983, it was clear to everyone that the match between Karpov and Kasparov could not take place: Karpov did not want it and the party leadership, which supported him unconditionally, did not want it either. Through a delicate game with Campomanes, it was agreed that Campomanes would propose the United States as the location for the match. But the Soviet party bosses knew in advance that the United States would be rejected by the Soviet side as the location for the game. At the same time, there was displeasure within the central apparatus of the KGB concerning the upstart Litvinov, who had managed to occupy a convenient position as caretaker of the rising star, Kasparov.

In the meantime, I had formed a different impression of Kasparov's steadfast chaperon. This happened in 1983. I had no doubts that Kasparov would not show up in the United States, in Pasadena, where Campomanes had scheduled the

match (and Kasparov indeed did not come there). But in the autumn of that year, Kasparov played in a tournament in Nikšic, Yugoslavia, and the organizers got the idea of using the presence of many strong chess players in Nikšic to conduct a speed chess tournament after the main event was over. I was also invited to participate in this speed chess tournament. I arrived in Nikšic on the following day.

Given the fact that I was meeting with Kasparov for the first time in my life in a relatively calm atmosphere, I naturally had the idea of talking to him about a possible match, in place of the one that had failed to take place in the United States. Four of us met: Kasparov came with Litvinov, and I came with my fan and "guardian angel," the writer Brana Crncevic. Litvinov made an excellent impression on me. KGB or not, I saw a man who looked after Kasparov as after a child, with virtually paternal concern for the young grandmaster. We talked... I was not interested at all in the fact that I had been declared the winner in the match in Pasadena, without a game, and I easily agreed that a match should take place. I remember that Litvinov proposed the Philippines as a location for the match, where there was a great deal of interest in chess, and in Kasparov personally. I reminded them that the Soviet military establishment had recently shot down a civilian airliner near the Sea of Japan, and that among the 250 dead there were 16 Filipinos, so that the Filipinos would be unlikely to root for the Soviets at the moment. Kasparov swallowed this observation without any problem, but Litvinov became deathly pale. It seemed that he was hearing the expression "Soviet military establishment" for the first time in his life. But his attitude toward me, extremely obliging and respectful, was unaffected.

My match with Kasparov, as is known, did take place. Among the various conditions that the Soviets had to fulfill (as petitioners!) was the termination of the Soviet boycott against me. Let me emphasize that I, personally, did not insist on this point. Where it came from and how it came to pass that the boycott was

ended, I have no idea. My guess is that Kasparov's protector in the top tier of the government, Heydar Aliyev, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, had a hand in the matter.

I recall one more meeting with Litvinov. In the summer of 1984, another match took place in London: the USSR vs. the rest of the world. The first board of the USSR's team was manned by Karpov, the second by Kasparov, the third by Polugaevsky (I beat him 2-1). But that's not the point. The world championship match between Karpov and Kasparov would soon begin. I saw the entire Soviet chess machine before me. But the only person who I felt was for Kasparov was Litvinov. And I found a convenient moment, called him aside, and took him for a walk in order to tell him some of my observations about the strong and weak sides of Karpov's game and behavior. A colonel of the KGB and an inveterate enemy of that organization and of the Soviet Union – strolling about London in peaceful conversation!

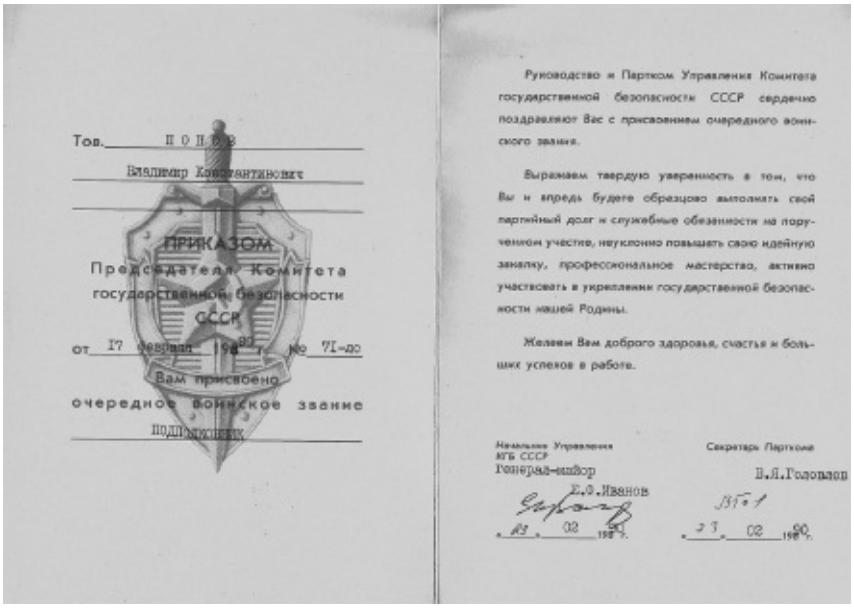
Naturally, there were snitches who immediately informed (maybe simply out of envy?) about Colonel Litvinov's "dubious behavior" and he was reprimanded by the high command. My apologies to Litvinov. I did not want to create difficulties for him. But I hope that my comments were useful to Kasparov...

Soon afterward, I stopped fighting for the world championship, and my clashes with the KGB ended. And after several more years, the Soviet Union collapsed, and I started paying visits to some of its fragments. When playing in front of audiences, I clearly sensed the emotional warmth of people, hundreds and thousands of people, who surrounded me. More than that, in Leningrad, Moscow, Ukraine – everywhere, I felt that people were, as it were, apologizing to me for dancing to the government's tune, for refusing to support me when the authorities started using me as their whipping boy... How ironic, I thought, the old staff of the KGB – was it not they who were responsible for this transformation in popular sentiment?

Letter from Vladimir Popov

Dear Mr. Felshtinsky,

I am writing to you after giving a great deal of thought to my fate, as well as to the fates of people who for various reasons left Russia in the 1990s and later; to Russia, to the vicissitudes of its political development, and to the processes taking place in it. These processes are, in my view, every day becoming more and more alarming.



Тов. ПОПОВ
Владимир Константинович

ПРИКАЗОМ
Председателя Комитета
государственной безопасности
СССР
от 17 февраля 1990 г. № 71-дс
Вам присвоено
очередное воинское звание
подполковник

Руководство и Партком Управления Комитета государственной безопасности СССР сердечно поздравляют Вас с присвоением очередного воинского звания.

Выражаем твердую уверенность в том, что Вы и впредь будете образцово выполнять свой партийный долг и служебные обязанности на порученном участке, неуклонно повышать свою идейную закалку, профессиональное мастерство, активно участвовать в укреплении государственной безопасности нашей Родины.

Желаем Вам доброго здоровья, счастья и больших успехов в работе.

Начальник Управления
КГБ СССР
Генерал-майор
Е.Ф.Иванов
23 02 1990 г.

Секретарь Парткома
В.Я.Головлев
23 02 1990 г.

Vladimir Popov's Certificate of Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, February 1990

I turn to you not only because I know you as a co-author of Alexander Litvinenko, murdered in London in November 2006, and I hope that you will not remain indifferent to what I have to say; but also because, according to the information available to me, the FSB currently has an active file on you and your life is in immediate danger.

In the past, I was an officer in the KGB, where I served from 1972 to 1991. I was discharged at my own request, with the rank of a lieutenant colonel and a discharge that read “transferred to work in the national economy.” I was 44 years old at the time. I could have gone on serving for years and years. But I did not want to... During my years of service, I became completely disillusioned about the ideals that state security was called upon to serve – its country and its people. The longer I served, the more clearly I saw that the KGB, one of the most important institutions of government, was once again acquiring the dark features of a repressive, rather than protective organization, that it had in the 1930s, a period of brutal repression in our country’s history.

With the beginning of perestroika, new hopes appeared for changes for the better. But pretty quickly it became apparent that these hopes would not be realized. In different regions of the country, human blood began to be shed. In certain concrete cases, these events were instigated by the KGB, for example, in Vilnius and Tbilisi. The individual who organized and conducted these events was Deputy Director of the KGB F. D. Bobkov, who for many years had been head of the KGB’s Fifth Directorate, in which I served.

Not wishing to be involved in criminally organizing bloodshed in the country, I aimed to terminate my service in the KGB as quickly as possible. While my request for a discharge was being considered, a group of political speculators headed by KGB Director Kryuchkov attempted to stage a government coup in the USSR (State Emergency Committee or the SEC). On the day that the state of emergency went into effect, I declared my categorical refusal to take any part in actions intended to support the SEC or to carry out the directives and commands of this illegal entity. All of my co-workers zealously rushed to carry out the orders they had received from their bosses, who aimed to make a full display of their loyalty to the illegitimate government, expecting to be promoted in return for their actions.

The SEC's supporters among KGB officers and generals, who formed the overwhelming majority (I must confess that I have never heard of anyone who refused to serve the SEC), had a common motivation: hatred for the democratic transformations in the country that Gorbachev had initiated. This was what explained their zeal in carrying out their criminal orders: closing democratic presses, arresting their main editors as well as reporters known for their democratic orientation, confiscating and destroying the publications of democratic presses, and arresting a number of the deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the highest legislative body in the Soviet Union.

The battle cry was raised: "Crush the lousy democrats!" Without Boris Yeltsin, this is precisely what would have happened: all of them would have been crushed. I, too, probably would not have been able to write what I am writing now. For refusing to carry out orders under a so-called "state of emergency," which is in essence an imposition of martial law and a suspension of all civic institutions (including the courts, which are replaced by military tribunals), individuals are sentenced to death, or in the best case, to long prison terms.

Whatever shortcomings scholars of recent Russian history might find in Boris Yeltsin's personality and the consequences of his rule, he undoubtedly deserves the credit for bringing down Communist rule in the country and for not allowing a bloody retaliation by the Communists. Those whose attempt at retaliation failed did not settle down. This was vividly demonstrated by the events of 1993. Pro-Communist deputies, refusing to carry out Russian President Boris Yeltsin's decree dissolving the Supreme Soviet, undertook what was in effect another attempt at a government coup. My colleagues from the Fifth Directorate of the KGB once again ended up among those who took up arms in opposition to the legitimate government. My categorical refusals to take part in actions directed against the democratic transformations in Russia had not been forgiven. More than once, people tried to settle scores with me. Fortunately for me, their

attempts were unsuccessful. But it was also pointless for me to test fate any longer. In August 1995, at the age of 48, I permanently left Russia, leaving behind everything that was dear to me – my dear old mother and my family.

Since that time, I have been living in Canada, but Russia's fate has continued to trouble me. In recent years, what is happening in Russia has become a constant source of alarm for me. In 1996, A. Korzhakov, an individual who had been close to Boris Yeltsin first as his personal bodyguard, and then as the head of the Presidential Security Service (SBP), made another attempt to organize a takeover by state security officers. I have become firmly convinced that Korzhakov must be blahmed for the death of Vladislav Listyev, the popular television anchorman and director of the ORT TV channel. Listyev's murder was undoubtedly a purely political murder that had the aim of eliminating Boris Berezovsky, by making him a suspect in the organization of Listyev's murder and compromising him in the eyes of Russian President Yeltsin and Russian society in general. At the same time, Korzhakov was planning to acquire control over ORT as part of his preparations for a government takeover in 1996. The publication of materials dealing with Listyev's murder and other criminal actions perpetrated by my former colleagues in the Fifth Directorate of the KGB would greatly help both Russian society, and world society as a whole, to follow the logic behind the subsequent events of contemporary Russian history.

As we know, Korzhakov's attempt to take power by force in 1996 failed. However, the idea of retaliation – and of power coming back into the hands of KGB officers – lived on in the minds of many in the security services. These individuals formed various factions, and these factions were often hostile to one another. But they were united by a common idea: the subordination of the country to the security services.

Recent events involving YUKOS and its head, Khodorkovsky, one of Russia's leading businessmen, constitute a vivid illustration of this idea. Among

Khodorkovsky's closest companions was General Major Kondaurov, a former agent in the KGB's Fifth Directorate who maintained excellent relations with the heads of the successor to the KGB's Fifth Directorate, the Directorate for the Protection of the Constitutional Order, General Major V. P. Vorotnikov and General Major A. N. Karbainov. Both of them had come to serve in the KGB's central directorate from high-ranking Communist Party-Komsomol positions in Siberia. Thanks to them, Kondaurov established close ties with the current leader of Russia's communists, G. Zyuganov, with whose help Kondaurov was elected to the State Duma on a Communist Party ticket. Fears that this group of experienced Communist Party functionaries and apparatchiks, backed by a Duma majority, might attempt to take power by force from current Russian President Vladimir Putin, caused Putin to deal mercilessly with Khodorkovsky and his whole financial empire. Without financial resources, Khodorkovsky is no threat to Putin. The power in the country remained in the hands of the KGB.

It was with the same aim in mind that KGB heavyweight General Bobkov began to build his financial group several years earlier. The Most Bank ("most" means "bridge" in Russian) and other entities that were created with his direct active involvement were not bridges into the future, but back to the past, since it was only in a police state that people such as Bobkov could feel comfortable.

During his tenure as Deputy Director of the KGB, for the first time in postwar Soviet history, Bobkov created a position for a KGB active-reserve officer in the highest Communist Party organ in the country, the Central Committee of the CPSU. The position was in the Central Committee's Management Department, which oversaw enormous sums of money – Party money. It was by no means an accident that after the collapse of the SEC, former Management Department heads Pavlov and Kruchina "jumped" out of their windows, one after the other, taking the secrets of the Party money along with them. Bobkov had resources to spare. He started out on a grand scale, simultaneously creating a new financial

entity (one needs money in any line of business) and forming a mini-KGB in the form of the Most Bank's powerful private security service, that later gained wide notoriety.

In an ordinary bank, a security service with the kinds of functions that the Most Bank's security service had would have been simply useless. But Bobkov had grandiose plans: to return everything back to the way it was. The Most Bank's security service was created for this purpose.

Korzhakov, serving as head of Boris Yeltsin's Presidential Security Service, felt threatened by Bobkov in his plans to take over the government. He tried to show who was boss in the country by organizing a demonstrative operation that the media called "face down in the snow."

The *chekists'* passionate desire to bring back the old power in the country was fulfilled by a small and ordinary-looking person, Vladimir Putin. Quiet, faceless, dependable, loyal to his bosses (up to a point), but also, like any true *chekist*, playing his own game. Using the democrats (A. Sobchak and A. Chubais), and then the connections and support of the well-known Russian businessman Boris Yeltsin, Putin achieved what none of his colleagues from the KGB could achieve. The full power of the Russian government came into his hands. It was by no means an accident that shortly after acquiring this power, in a speech before the leadership of the FSB, he made the historic pronouncement: "The main task has been accomplished. Power in the country is ours." Many who were not part of the FSB or Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) mistakenly assumed that Putin was joking. In reality, he was more than serious. Putin knew to whom he was talking when he made this statement. He realized perfectly well that his and his KGB-FSB-SVR colleagues' dearest wish had been fulfilled: the government was once again in the hands of the security services. And they would know what to do with it.

Over 7,000 former state security officials are employed in various government agencies in Russia today. What Russia has turned into during the tenure of Putin and his former colleagues from the KGB is well known. Independent media no longer exists and human rights activists are persecuted as brutally as they were in Soviet times. It has become dangerous to speak the truth in Putin's Russia. As the torturous death of Alexander Litvinenko, Putin's colleague and former subordinate at the FSB, showed, it has become dangerous to speak the truth outside of Russia as well. According to Putin and his crony and co-worker in Soviet intelligence Sergey Ivanov, Litvinenko did not know any secrets. This is not true. Litvinenko knew the FSB's main secret. This was that all FSB officers today are bandits who are shamelessly raping the country.

Regardless of who it was that issued the order for Litvinenko's murder, one thing is obvious: Litvinenko's murder was the work of the hands of Putin's regime, just as the murder of the reporter Anna Politkovskaya, since both of these cynical murders were equally advantageous both to Putin's rule and to Putin's opponents within the FSB.

Putin is a stranger in Moscow. He brought his own people with him and placed them in all available positions. In the capitol, such a state of affairs is by no means satisfactory to all of his former colleagues in the KGB-FSB. They, too, want access to big political power. Power in resource-rich Russia consists above all in money. And those who feel deprived are lusting for retaliation.

The Russian presidential election is approaching. Whether it will take place or not – time will tell. The intensity of the political struggle is apparent, as is the authorities' fear of losing their power, and their impunity along with it. If a team composed of power-deprived KGB-FSB employees comes to power, purges will follow; therefore, those who have power now will not simply give it away. They will hold on to it until the end. In this scenario, those who have power now, and those who will seek to acquire it, will spare no means to achieve their aims: the

stakes are too high.

Sensing danger, the current regime is overcome with paranoid fear. This is the reason for the government's vastly inappropriate reaction to the dissenters' marches and to any actions by any opposition of any stripe. One might wonder: What threat could possibly be posed to the Kremlin by the great chess player and true democrat Garry Kasparov? What danger is there in his sharp pronouncements? In a democratic country, such as Putin's Russia portrays itself to be, criticism of the government is not supposed to be prohibited. Yet Kasparov is besmirched by anyone and everyone.

As a former officer of Soviet state security who worked in the counterintelligence monitoring of international sports exchange channels, I officially declare that for the entire period of his sports career in the USSR, Kasparov was under constant surveillance by the KGB. Moreover, various measures were taken to prevent him from defeating Karpov, his perpetual chess opponent. Under surveillance, Kasparov proved himself to be a person of true humanist and democratic convictions, never making any deals with the authorities that went against his own notions. By doing so, he sometimes placed his professional future at risk, but he never compromised his principles. That is just the kind of man he is.

Since entering politics, he has remained as uncompromising and, I am convinced, as honest as he was in his youth. He is now a man made wiser by life experience, a man not looking for personal gain in politics, and one would like to wish him success and patience. The second of these he has in abundance.

Meanwhile, a toxic cloud of paranoia has settled over the Kremlin. Consider, for example, Mr. Lugovoy's recent pronouncements about the late Litvinenko and Berezovsky's recruitment into the British security services and the subsequent instigation of criminal proceedings against Berezovsky on charges of espionage.

One would like to get some straight answers from Mr. Lugovoy. First of all, let me note that I have doubts concerning his guilt (I am not speaking about his partial complicity) in Litvinenko's murder. But that is not my subject at the moment.

Lugovoy served in a Kremlin regiment in which probably every other person, from foot soldier to top commander, was an agent of the KGB, or more precisely, of the Second Department of the KGB's Fifth Directorate. It was impossible to join the staff of the 18th section (which consisted of so-called "attached agents" or bodyguards) of this directorate without being an agent of this subdivision. And all attached agents were agents of the KGB. So Lugovoy, just like his former chief Korzhakov, who had traveled the same path, had extensive experience of working as an agent among other agents. Incidentally, in an interview he gave after Litvinenko's death, Korzhakov stated literally the following: "I don't think that Scotland Yard will be able to crack Lugovoy." This was what worried Korzhakov, Lugovoy's former boss, and not whether his former subordinate, an agent in the president's personal security unit, was guilty or not. Korzhakov could have appointed only someone he trusted to provide personal security for the young, reform-minded Prime Minister Ye. Gaidar. As an operative "attached" to Gaidar, Lugovoy would have had to inform on the Prime Minister to Korzhakov. There can be little doubt that this was precisely what happened.

This gives rise to a reasonable question: Why did Lugovoy, an FSB agent in the recent past, meet with foreign intelligence operatives for one-and-a-half years without informing anyone about it? It is Lugovoy himself, in this case, that ought to be charged with criminal misconduct – in order to discover what he revealed to British intelligence (since the substance of their conversations is known only to them and to him). Even if these actions did not constitute espionage on Lugovoy's part (according to the corresponding article of the

Russian criminal code), then they certainly violated the article regarding “failure to inform of an impending crime.”

Lugovoy may speculate that various individuals are British agents. But he has no right to make such assertions. The key point is that his actions constitute violations of the Russian criminal code, which the Russian General Prosecutor’s Office for some reason fails to notice. It is too busy initiating proceedings on espionage charges against Berezovsky, an individual with political refugee status in Great Britain.

And another question: If Lugovoy possessed this information, why did he take something like two weeks to prepare for his press conference? The answer is plain as day: he was being prepared for this press conference. By whom? Let Mr. Lugovoy answer that question, and he will shed a great deal of light on this complicated episode.

Unfortunately, the Kremlin is prepared to sacrifice many people in order to prevent anything in the country from changing. It is not only Kasparov who is in danger. The reporter Elena Tregubova escaped from Russia with her life after publishing critical materials about the practices of Putin’s government. The FSB began working on her case and her life really was in danger. Recently, your co-author [of *The Corporation: Russia and the KGB in the Age of President Putin*, Encounter Books, 2008] Vladimir Pribylovsky’s apartment was searched and his computers confiscated. Trust my experience as a former KGB officer – this operation was aimed at you, Mr. Felshtinsky. Such an operation, supplemented by the mention of certain articles of the criminal code, exerts a powerful psychological influence on the person whose apartment is searched, after which the attempt is made to recruit him as an agent of the security services – in this instance, the FSB or the SVR. The object of this recruitment is you, as someone who worked with Litvinenko against the security services and Putin. Russian state security is now working on your case. Be careful.

Vladimir Konstantinovich Popov
Lieutenant Colonel of the KGB (Ret.)
July 15, 2007. Canada

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